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Jubilee Celebration

1897.

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THE

JUBILEE HISTORY

OF THE

Leeds Industrial Co-operative Society,

FROM 1847 TO 1897.

TRACED YEAR BY YEAR.

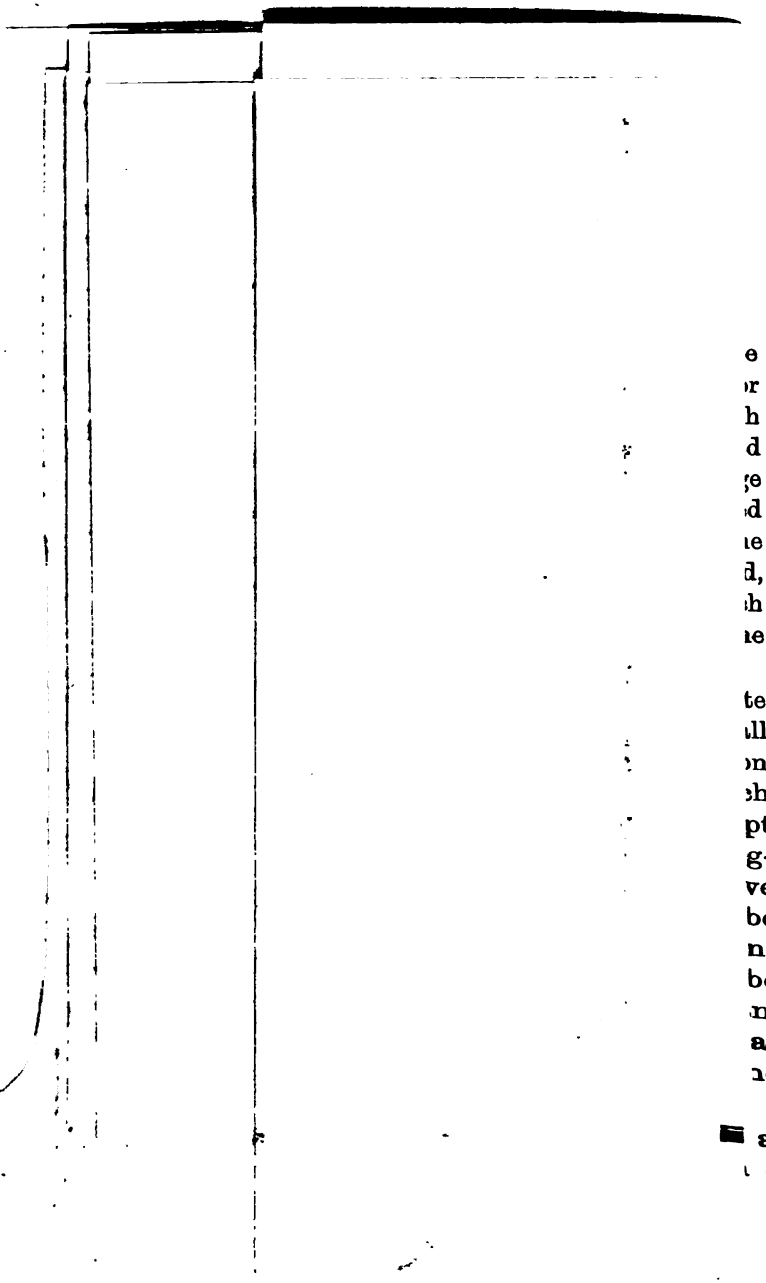
By GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE.

Co-operation seeks improvement by self-effort. That is one great merit: and it asks nothing of the State—that is another.—*The late Lord Derby's last letter to the Author.*

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LIMITED)

CO-OPERATIVE I

TO MAP *(Continued).*

NAME OF STORE.

G BU. CENTRAL SLAUGHTER HOUSE.

BU.

BU.

D BU. C.

B BU RM.

G.

PREFACE.

THE purpose of this book is to celebrate the Jubilee of the Leeds Industrial Co-operative Society, and to set forth, for the encouragement of others, how a few working men, with no resources save good sense and good determination, founded the greatest co-operative store in the world. This is a large thing to say, but it is statistically true. To others who joined the originators, or have been their successors in carrying the movement forward, high credit is due. All who have organised, year by year, down to this day, the surprising operations which have obtained such notable success are equally entitled to the repute which belongs to the great enterprise.

The Directors have done me the honour to ask me to write this Jubilee History, from 1847 to 1897. A story which shall satisfy the views of 37,000 members (the number actually upon the books) is an adventurous undertaking. However much interest the subject has for me, I should hesitate to attempt it, did I not know the abiding tolerance of co-operative judgment. The Directors have prescribed no course, nor have they imposed any conditions, or qualification of opinion to be expressed; therefore, not they, but the writer alone, is responsible for what is said. Where the ideas of many have to be taken into account, my rule is not to consider what I am *expected* to say, but what *ought* to be said, as facts appear to warrant, and the wide interest of the members and co-operative principle require.

Lancashire men are regarded as possessing solid vigour, as the rise of the Rochdale Pioneers has shown; but the men of

Yorkshire are accounted the most adroit and impassable of the English race. But the greater the capacity the greater the good sense, and upon that I rely.

The attention I have had to give to the records of the Society has given me a new conception of the character, merits, and example of the Leeds Pioneers, who have not been estimated as they deserve. Their incessant efforts to make clear to the working class that co-operation meant something higher than mere commercialism; their splendid endeavours to warm the frozen heart of ignorant selfishness, as cold and obstructive as the ponderous icebergs Nansen encountered on his heroic and perilous way—have never been exceeded, and never equalled in their continuity. Met by the charge of being "sentimental"—a term silly people use to disparage what they do not understand, or do not want—the leaders of the Leeds Society never despaired and never desisted. They have always regarded intelligence as a sound investment, and have often advocated profit-sharing as an integral part of co-operation, as a self-acting store movement.

I knew co-operation when it was born. I stood by its cradle. In every journal, newspaper, and review with which I was connected, I defended it in its infancy, when no one thought it would live. For years I was its sole friend and representative in the press. I have lived to see it grow to robust and self-supporting manhood. To me it is no mean pleasure that the last co-operative work I am likely to write, is the history of the triumphs of the Leeds Society.

As it becomes more widely known by its Jubilee History, its remarkable distinction will be acknowledged. It stands next to Rochdale as the foremost English co-operative association, and surpasses it in its valiant conflicts, its organisation, its marvellous gains, and vast army of members who gather around its standard-bearers.

G. J. H.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

Before the Society Began 1

CHAPTER II.

Origin of the Society (1847) 6

CHAPTER III.

The First Committee of Organisation (1847).. 13

CHAPTER IV.

The Wonderful Rules (1847) 17

CHAPTER V.

The First Directors (1847) 20

CHAPTER VI.

The Fifty-Eight Pioneers of Leeds (1847) 24

CHAPTER VII.

HISTORICAL CHRONICLE YEAR BY YEAR.

1847.

A Novel Plan of Distribution—Co-operators in a Minority 27

1848.

Trenchant Resolutions—A Forty Weeks' Levy—No Power to Buy Land—A Timely Discovery—Deadly Adulteration—Dr. Chorley's Courage—The Peril of Cheap Selling—Co-operative Stores a Public Necessity 28

1849.

The Double Share Rule Rescinded—The First Accident—A Friendly Miller—Bankers' Confidence—Golden Words of Counsel.. 31

1850.

Contentiousness Creeping About—The Ideas which incite It 33

PAGE

1851.

"Something Wrong"—Democratic Duty in Complaint—Co-operative Qualities—Irreconcilables Reconciled by a Real Audit—Mr. Plint's Masterly Examination—His Wise and Bold Counsel 34

1852.

A Remarkable Audit—The Trouble of Purity—Disadvantage of Cheapness—Dividends should be Palpable—Concealed Profits—Remunerative Prices Adopted—Care in Terms Good Policy—The Old Man and his Three Stones of Flour.. 39

1853.

Remunerative Prices Produce Profit and Content—Principle at any Price—The Field of Co-operation Enlarged—Mr. Gaunt's Repartees—Directors Risk Misjudgment—Utopianism comes True—Appearance of the People's Mill—Mr. Bovill's Bill—Stationary Men and Forward Men—Wild Democrats at Large .. 44

1854.

Violence, Want of Skill—Cat's Paw Agents—Mr. Gaunt Holds the Floor—The Crimean War Reaches to the Leeds Mill—Advice to go Outside the Movement Taken—Dribbling 49

1855.

A Tame Year—An Anti-Adulteration Society—Lloyd Jones's Far-Seeing Proposal .. 51

1856.

Dangers of Premature Experiments—A Store Resolved Upon—Co-operative Maxims—Complaints Taken by the Throat—An Investigation Committee—The Accusations Disproved—A Transformation Scene—Directors Dismissed—The New Directors Follow the same Policy for which their Predecessors were Removed—The First Shop Opened in Briggate—A Fighting Year—A Trustee comes to the Front—John Holmes takes the Floor—The Parliamentary Inquiry—Mr. Emmerson's Cogent Evidence 53

1857.

Frogs About—Organisation of the Agents—A Penitent Agent—Conspiracy of Agents—The Briggate Store Languishes—Victory of Ignorance—The Briggate Store Dies—A Great Temptation—Another Vindicatory Audit 60

1858.

An Amazing Announcement—Plato's Republic Terrifies the Wise Men of Leeds—Sir Edward Baines on the Parallelogram—Political Economy Opposed to Co-operation—Rochdale Visited—The Agents Superseded—A new "Fangle" Pays better than the old Fangle—Mr. Prentis's Services 64

PAGE

1859.

The Ovens of Discontent—Revolutions of Progress—The Worker his Own Helper—Members for the First Time Suggest a New Department—Trustees Counsel Participation in Profit—Cheapness Means Low Dividends 66

1860.

The Pamphlet of an Enthusiast—A Rival Corn Mill—The Trustees' Report—The Warehouse over the Stables—Storekeepers' Share in Profits—Co-operators Against Retreating before Surmountable Obstacles—A Servant causes a Division—Letters to the "Express".. 68

1861.

Survival of the Fittest in Co-operation—The Meat Selling Difficulty—In Search of Prosperity in Vacant Places and Street Corners—Garibaldi Funds Recovered.. 73

1862.

The "Fangle" Terror Over—A Tealess Tea—A Women's Guild Wanted—The Hospitality of Co-operation—Drapery Droops—Generous Sympathy with the American Cause 74

1863.

Smooth Water—The Clothing Ship Becalmed—Members Determine to Keep it at Sea 76

1864.

An Irritating Item—Intricacies of Trusteeship—The Device of Free Ticket Meetings—Withdrawals from Necessity and Ill-Will—Offers of Capital by Members—A New Wonder comes to Sight—Profit-Sharing Recognised.. 77

1865.

Beneficial Absentees—New Name for a Ferocious Department—Prof. F. W. Newman's Argument—An Incredible Class of Purchasers—A Former Device Retried.. 79

1866.

Queen Elizabeth's Sagacity—Thought for Servants—The First Flood—Benefit of a Reserve Fund 80

1867.

Discontent Divine and Different—Coal Trade Begun—Flour the Staple of the Society's Life—Test Ordered—Disembodied Agents Walk Abroad—Why Stores Lagged Behind the Mill.. 81

PAGE

1868.

A Manager Dismissed—Storm Drums Run Up—A Cyclone nearly Blows the Society Over—The Directors in a Maelstrom 83

1869.

A General Manager Proposed—Money Abounds—Large Forfeits—Sixteen Buyers at large in the Markets—The Directors have a Plan—The Coal Plant Bought—Credit Tried—Exploded, but not Killed 84

1870.

No Independence with Debt—Associative Conferences—Advantages of a Buying Society—An End of Bovill 86

1871.

Growth All Round—Stores too Small—Customers Wait for Hours to be Served—More Powerful Machines Ordered—Increase in Turnover and Profits—Shorter Hours Conceded to Mill Hands 87

1872.

An Honourable Vote—Singular Education Contest—Vocal Worms Crawl Out—Eloquent Figures—A Prophecy comes True deemed a sign of Insanity when made 88

1873.

A Year of Principle—Stores Arise Around—Ready-Made Clothing Begun—Boot Manufacture Commenced—Storekeepers Accorded Profits—Support given to Co-operative Workshops—Large Grants—House Building for Members—Producers more Meritorious than Consumers—A Consistent Co-operative Resolution — Striking Report of the Educational Committee — "Leeds Mercury" Office Bought—Financial Progress 90

1874.

Prosperity and Speculation—Demonstrations Tell—A Memorable Opening—A Splendid Procession—Notable Speakers at Night—Increase in Members and Profits—The Tallerman Resolution—Amazing Investment in the Tipton Green Colliery—£19,000 Lost—The Morley Colliery a Candidate for Surplus Money—A Prudent Amendment—A Convalescent Home Proposed—The Credit Snake still Crawling About—A Further Education Vote—Mr. Fawcett becomes Cashier 93

1875.

New Orleans Company Floaters come Leeds way—Profit-Sharing Suspended—The Mill Enlarged Again—More Land Bought—Fifty-one Cottages Built—Carlton Hill Estate Bought—The Convalescent Home "Inopportune"—The Lion Estate under Consideration 97

PAGE

1876.

Dolour in all the Stores—Directors Check the Panic but not the Weeping—The Philosophy of Investment—Another Education Tumult—The Mistake that Ignorance is Harmless—Increase of Stores, Houses, and Land—Handsome Consideration for Distressed Members—New Machinery Costs £4,000—Official Shyness of the Meat Trade—Directors Better Paid—A General Store Visitor Appointed—His Multitudinous Duties 99

1877.

Another Educational Battle—Ignorance Wins—More Stores Opened—Flour Mill Machinery again Increased—Its Producing Power Doubled 102

1878.

Further Battle for Education—The Propagandists Defeated—An Indignant Night—A Sagacious Motion—Thieves Discovered—Generosity of the Society at Home and Abroad—Barebone Reports—Growth all Along the Line—Foundation of an Annual Holiday 106

1879.

Generosity a Form of Progress—List of Grants to Charities—A Bakery Springs Up in a Night—Its Previous Tardiness—The Prudence of taking in the "Co-operative News"—Non-buying Members Disappear—A Wise Device—Death of a Valued President—The Business of the Society Running on Castors 106

1880.

Services of Directors Recognised—Congress invited to Leeds—A Library and News-room Established—Mr. Fawcett Appointed Secretary and Cashier—A Board Clerk Elected—Another Asperser Extinguished by Facts—The Composition of Pure Butter—Meat Selling still "Inopportune"—The Great Snow Night—Loss of Two Leaders—The Society still Growing 108

1881.

The Great Conflagration—Costly Eccentricity of the Town Brigade—Singular Origin of the Fire—The Process of Flour Making—An "undesirable" Motion—Building at Carlton Hill—Report in Favour of the Wholesale—A Full Dress Debate—An Amalgamated Manager—Forged Checks—The New Bakery Opened—An Inundation of Money—Co-operative Watches—The Thirteenth Co-operative Parliament Meet in Leeds—Testimony of a Member of Congress. 111

1882.

The *Monthly Record*—Idle Capital in an Active Store—Profitable Suggestiveness—Drapery and Clothing Clubs Devised—Rapidity of Restoration—Friendly Millers—A Splendid Procession—Career of a Drayman—Effect of the Demonstration—Participation with Industry Still in the Air 118

PAGE

1883.

The Law of Circumspection—A Tribute to Mr. Tabbern—Success of the Mill—A New Keel on the Water—The Leeds Old Post Office Bought 122

1884.

Cost of the Central Stores—The "Co-operative Traveller Abroad"—Description of the New Building—Its Fairy Scene at Night—The Locomotive on its March—Discussions on the Sky Line—Then and Now—The Oldham Example—Purchase of the Victoria Bridge Coal Wharf—Scenes on the River and on the Bank—How Profits are Appropriated 123

1885.

Activity of the Fundless Educational Committee—Co-operation among Creatures of Land, Water, and Air—The Long-looked-for Motion—Mr. Fawcett's Calculations—Extension of Depreciation—No Falling Off in Profits 132

1886.

No Sun of Freedom Shines on Ignorance—An Educational Levy Carried at Last—The Contest of the Fractions—The Lowest Adopted—Mr. Herbert Spencer's Judgment—An Ignorant Son Fetches less per lb. than one Educated—Intelligence a Paying Investment—Meat Sales Re-commenced—All Sorts of Progress being made in this Triumphant Year 134

1887.

A Year of Light—Two Temples—The Stores Manager Succeeds—A Perilous Investment Rejected—A Golden Item in the Balance Sheet—Forty Years in the Wilderness—A Splendid Retrospect.. 136

1888.

The Dawn Visible Now—Leeds Far Ahead of Rochdale—Death of Mr. Teasdill—Presentation to Mr. Prentis—Story of Hebden Bridge—Capital to Spare—Amenities to Labour—Good Results all Round 139

1889.

Peculiarities of the Plum Mind—Nine Advantages of Local Co-operation—Commencement of the Women's Guild in Leeds—Their Nine Branches—Social Effects of Profit-Sharing — New Stores Arising in all Directions — Budget Difficulties of the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the Society—Good Items .. 141

1890.

The Abattoir Year—The Foundation Stone Laid—Its Opening in October—Unsurpassed in Completeness—Its Amazing Business—A Small Fire at the Corn Mill—New Premises to be Purchased in Albion Street—New Enterprises, New Alterations, and New Investments—Indifference to Prosperity 144

PAGE

1891.

The Pleasant Monotony of Success—Government Report on Co-operative Profit-Sharing—Meadow Road Buildings—The Cricket Field, Camp Field Mill, and other Purchases—Balance Sheets Enlarged—An Old Prophet Astonished .. 149

1892.

The Leeds Ship and its Tonnage of Dividends—The Farming Problem Debated—Conditions of the Leeds Education Rate—Participation, a New Sense—The Wholesale, the Two Sides of the Question—Yeast and Eggs commenced to be Imported—The Spiral Store of Elford Grove—Pleasant Caprices of Profit .. 153

1893

Perplexity of the New Zealander in Leeds—The Street with the National Name—Public Taste in Stores—Death of a Foremost Advocate—Fire and Flood—Cricket Field Habitations—The Leeds Musicians at the Crystal Palace—Trade Depression but no Profit Depression.. 159

1894.

The Auxiliary Stores—Architectural Taste Economy in Business—Two Essentials of a Co-operative Store—Obliviousness of Architects—The Distinction of the Day—Peripatetic Shops—What Mr. Maxwell "Has Never Seen"—The Strawberry Store—A Meat Employés' Union—A Clearing House for Latent Members—Lucid Balance Sheets—Great Growth of the Society—No Educational Insolvency Now.. 161

1895.

Constitutional Dissatisfaction—Responsibilities of Popularity—"The Leeds Resolution"—Dies by its Own Hand—Distinction of the Leeds Musicians—New Stores Opened—New Memorial Stones Laid—Another Wonderful Year .. 172

1896.

Revelations of Industrial Photography—The First Flour Shop—Half a Century of Progress—A Jubilee Contemplated—Marshall Street Buildings—The Parallelogram Come at Last—New Factories Began—The Debating Classes in Operation—Additions to Mill and Abattoir—New Estates Being Purchased—New Streets and Terraces Being Built—Prodigious Business—Another Marvellous Year 175

1897.

Looking Backwards—The Famous Past—Disadvantages of Pioneer Times—Triumphant Days—Opportunities of Rule Revising—Business and Progress the Order of the Day—Loss of an Old Leader—Generosity of the Society—Its Support of Co-operative Workshops—Field Club Studies—Scenic Changes Produced by Co-operators in Leeds—Six Hundred and Fifty Houses Built—The City Within a City—What 87,000 Members Mean—The Distinction of Leeds—What Co-operation Really Does—Marvellous Results—A Million of Trade—One Hundred and Fifty Thousand Pounds of Profit—The President of the Jubilee 187

PAGE

CHAPTER VIII.

The Map 198

CHAPTER IX.

The Branches 199

CHAPTER X.

The Secretaries 208

CHAPTER XI.

The Presidents 217

CHAPTER XII.

Financial Progress 231

CHAPTER XIII.

The Leeds *Record* 242

CHAPTER XIV.

Changes in Leeds During Fifty Years 244

CHAPTER XV.

Memorable Workers 247

CHAPTER XVI.

The Society's Productive Operations 256

CHAPTER XVII.

Characteristics of the Society 258

ILLUSTRATIONS.

PAGE

Robert Wilson Ambler 8

John Park 9

Joseph Nowell 11

"People's Mill" 47

William Swallow.. 71

George Hyde.. 114

Edward Dumbleton 121

Central Premises—Albion Street (East Side) 125

Coal Wharf, Victoria Bridge 129

Abattoir, Gelderd Road 145

Building Department, Meadow Road 151

Elford Grove Stores 157

Albion Street Stores (West Side) 163

Hunslet (Church Street) Stores 167

Strawberry House Stores, Tong Road 169

First Flour Agent's Shop, Stocks Hill, Bramley—Opened 1847 177

Flour Mill, Grocery and Drapery Warehouses, Boot Factory, Bakery, Stables, Stores, &c., Marshall Street, Holbeck 179

Cabinet Works and Brush Factory, Brookfield Street, Hunslet 181

Mill Committee 185

Educational Committee 193

James Tetley, President of the Society 195

Burley Road Stores 205

William Emmerson 209

John W. Fawcett, Secretary 211

Sir Edwin Gaunt 215

Wm. Bell 221

John Speed 225

Finance Committee 235

Grocery Committee 237

The Managers of the Society.. 239

THE LEEDS

Industrial Co-operative Society

LIMITED.

JUBILEE, 1897.

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JUBILEE * CELEBRATION.

AN EXHIBITION

— OF —

Co-operative Productions

WILL BE OPENED IN THE

ARTILLERY DRILL HALL, FENTON STREET, LEEDS,

On SATURDAY, September 4th, 1897,

— BY —

Mr. JOHN W. FAWCETT, Secretary.

CHAIR TO BE TAKEN AT 11 A.M. BY

Mr. JAMES TETLEY, President.

Choice Selections of Music will be played by

Mr. Chas. Dyson's Orchestral Band,

— AND —

THE LEEDS ARTILLERY BAND.

The Exhibition will remain open as follows:—

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER	**4th**	**from**	**11 a.m. to 9 p.m.**
MONDAY	**6th**	**„**	**10 a.m. to 9 p.m.**
TUESDAY	**7th**	**„**	**10 a.m. to 9 p.m.**
WEDNESDAY	**8th**	**„**	**10 a.m. to 6 p.m.**

Mr. DYSON'S Band will also give Selections of Music on MONDAY and TUESDAY.

A SERIES OF

Public Meetings

WILL BE HELD IN THE

COLISEUM, COOKRIDGE ST., LEEDS,

AS FOLLOWS:—

On Saturday Evening, Sept. 4th, at 7 o'clock.

Chairman:—

The Right Hon. The LORD MAYOR OF LEEDS (Sir James Kitson, Bart., M.P.).

Speakers:—

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Musical Selections by Mr. CHAS. DYSON'S Orchestral Band and Mr. JNO. BROWNING'S Concert Party, consisting of the following well-known Artistes:—

Miss EMMA WILBY, Soprano; Miss EDNA THORNTON, Contralto; Mr. CHAS. BLAGBRO, Tenor; —— Mr. JNO. BROWNING, Bass; Mr. W. N. HUDSON, Accompanist.

On Monday Evening, Sept. 6th, at Half-past Seven o'clock.

Chairman:—

Mr. JAMES TETLEY (President of the Society).

Speakers:—

Mr. E. O. GREENING (London) and Mr. JNO. EXLEY (Leeds).

Musical Selections by MADAME DEWS (London) and THE LEEDS CO-OPERATIVE CHORAL SOCIETY.

On Tuesday Evening, Sept. 7th, at Half-past Seven o'clock.

Chairman:—

Mr. JAMES TETLEY (President of the Society).

Speakers:—

Mr. JNO. LEACH and Mr. J. C. GRATION (Leeds).

Musical Selections by MADAME DEWS (London) and THE LEEDS CO-OPERATIVE CHORAL SOCIETY.

Before the Society Began.

CHAPTER I.

THE Leeds Flour Society, like Rome, did not grow in a day, but soon after it began it grew faster than Rome did—because its founders understood that what honesty is to business so principle is to progress. Others in Leeds may have believed as much, but none acted upon the belief that without honesty in business there can be no permanent trade, and without adherence to principle there can be no public confidence. By this discernment the co-operators have won profit and respect.

The reader will naturally expect to learn how this Society arose and what preceded it, for every intelligent person knows now that progress does not come by chance, but is a matter of evolution from something which went before. The previous is the foundation of the present.

For several years before the commencement of the Leeds Society, the condition of the people had the three characteristics of the time—scarcity of employment, low wages, long hours of labour. The "Condition of Leeds Question," as Carlyle would have called it, was the subject of public meetings. At the commencement of 1843 pauper relief had increased from 30 per cent to 60 per cent. During the year the "Benevolent and Strangers' Friend Society" had con-

siderably over 2,000 applications for relief. The Public Soup Kitchen, supported by voluntary contributions, was opened several days a week, with few intermissions, from 1843 to 1847. An excellent soup, as Mr. William Campbell learned from the report of his neighbours, was sold at 1d. per quart, tickets being issued often gratuitously to the extent, frequently, from 10,000 to 15,000 a week. In one district a committee was formed to ascertain, by house to house visitation, the extent of destitution existing, and found that nearly a thousand families were in the receipt of not more than 10¾d. per head per week. In another populous district 12½ per cent of the population were receiving parish relief.

The necessity for gratuitous sustenance was so great that the supply of soup had to be increased to 19,200 quarts, at a cost of £200 a week. A petition was sent to Parliament for protection against the powerloom, which displaced workmen and increased the unemployed by thousands. Parliament did not see its way to do anything, and did not want to see it. The greatest objection to Free Trade has been its want of consideration to workmen temporally ruined by it, which has set workmen in every nation against Free Trade. Those who made fortunes by the powerloom should have been assessed, so far as was necessary, to succour those who were displaced, until new employment was found for them. Invention, which was hated, resented, and opposed unto death in many places, would then have been popular, and the use of inventions would have been honourably accelerated.

The Leeds Flour Society did not spring up out of nothing. Co-operation was in the air, but it was not bred there—it was put there. Several Leeds men of capacity and influence had been interested in the "New Views of Society," promulgated by Robert Owen. When Queenwood had failed, they were disconcerted—but not discouraged—and some of them met in the Unitarian Meeting House on Sunday afternoons, and endeavoured to found another industrial city, which should show the working class the way of self extrication. It took the aspiring title of the "Redemption" Society. The movement commenced in 1845. Mr. William Howitt afterwards described it, in his Journal, as a "Co-operative League," but the committee unfortunately adopted the more ambitious and pretentious name of the "Redemption Society." The *Leader*

newspaper published subscriptions received by the Society. The lists came to me. We all approved of the object in view, but when we had to announce subscriptions of 1s. 2d. in Leeds, 10d. from Edinburgh, and 4d. from Glasgow, readers felt that, with contributions so slender, the redemption of the world was a long way off. But in the earlier days of the Society the support was greater. During 1846 the promoters took the field, or rather the streets, by making house to house visitations, obtaining members and penny per week subscriptions. Working people had very little to give in those days. A Mr. G. Williams gave the Society, conditionally, an estate in Wales on which to try their experiment. Three persons went from Leeds—E. C. Denton, a joiner, who died only a few weeks ago; J. W. Gardiner, a shoemaker, still living in Leeds; and a youth named Hobson. The first annual Redemption meeting was held in the Music Hall, Leeds (January 7th, 1847), when William Howitt took the chair, and made an excellent speech on co-operation. The speakers were the Rev. Edmund R. Larken (a large proprietor of the *Leader*), Dr. F. R. Lees, Joseph Barker, Joshua Hobson, James Hole, and the chief inspirer of the movement—David Green. About 200 persons, interested in the social enterprise, took tea together. Lord Ashley, Douglas Jerrold, Joseph Sturge, Henry Vincent, Rev. Thomas Spencer (uncle of Herbert Spencer), wrote letters to the meeting; and Joseph Mazzini, who sent a subscription with his letter, asked to be enrolled as a member. Hence the reader will see the Society had distinguished well-wishers. It was stated there were 600 members belonging to it. The subscriptions for the year exceeded £181, while the expenses had been only £17.

The method of this Society shows the reader how co-operation was the original device of these social reformers. The Redemption Society did a little distributive trade in groceries and provisions. It had a shop, and its commodities were sold at its place of meeting, which was an upper room in Trinity Street, over a stable. It was open in the evenings only, when a member of the committee attended. The principal article sent from the Society's estate in Wales was blackberry jam. Blackberries being plentiful about the place, labourers' children gathered them and sold them to the little Colony for a shilling a basket, and so jam came to the

Redemption Society in Trinity Street, Leeds. Thus Robert Owen's scheme of Industrial Cities (then called communities) were in the minds of the thinking artisans of Leeds. Lloyd Jones, one of my colleagues of the Social Missionary group, had often visited Leeds, and about 1847 was living there. Public discussions had been held there. The *Northern Star* had been published in Leeds. Many men of ability in the town knew all about co-operation.

Several volumes of the *New Moral World* were printed and published by Joshua Hobson, at 5, Market Street, Leeds. In the *New Moral World* for 1839, no fewer than eighteen notices are accorded to Leeds. Robert Owen, G. A. Fleming, Lloyd Jones, Dr. Frederic Hollick (still living in New York), Robert Buchanan, James Rigby, and all the lights of the "Socialism" of that day—not dreamy but definite—not revolutionary but constructive—had spoken in Leeds. A hall was held by these advocates, and lectures delivered weekly, and famous discussions were held at times. Richard Carlile and Lloyd Jones met in Leeds. From 1838 to 1841, Leeds was an emporium of social ideas.

The principal apostles of the Redemption Society were David Green, Lloyd Jones, Dr. Lees, James Hole, John Holmes, William Campbell, William Bell, John Hunt, and E. Gaunt. Mr. Campbell, whose recollections I follow, is not aware that there was any single member of the Redemption Society among the early originators of the Flour Society, and only three names—Green, Holmes, and Hole—can be rightly counted among the fifty-eight precursors elsewhere enumerated. The two movements were essentially distinct and promoted by different persons. Nevertheless, when the Redemption movement was found impracticable with the means available, its leaders, acting on Goethe's great maxim, "Do the duty nearest hand," carried their enthusiasm and larger knowledge into the ranks of the Flour Society when it was appealing for public support, and needing it. The names of those who thus assisted will be found frequently occurring in the ensuing narrative. Some of them became directors, some of them presidents. Lloyd Jones and John Holmes, two of the most influential directors of the Flour Society, lost their seats through advocating forward steps, such as the addition of the grocery and provision business to the Flour Society. They

constituted the elements of progress in the Flour Association, and supplied, at their own peril, the inspiration which carried it forward into the region of larger co-operation, which has led to its great distinction and success. James Hole delivered a series of lectures on "Social Science and the Organisation of Labour," which the Rev. Dr. Hook said was the best book he had ever read upon the subject. Thus, when the Benyon Mill men, of whom the reader will soon learn more, came into the field, there was already, as has been shown, a body of ready-made opinion in sympathy with their project and ready to advance it. It may be said that the Redemption Society was the precursor of co-operation in Leeds.

Origin of the Society.

[1847.]

CHAPTER II.

FLOUR was the beginning of the famous Society which is the immediate subject of these pages. There is a tradition of Pitt that he once began one of his sonorous speeches in the House of Commons with the word "Sugar." Sugar is so familiar a term that it seemed trivial, and the triviality of the term concealed its importance. The great orator paused at the word "sugar," and the House laughed, thinking perhaps that he meant to sugar them, upon which Pitt repeated the word with indignant emphasis, at which they laughed again. The third time he connected the word with its context in his mind, and Parliament were all attentive and laughed no more. Let us hasten, therefore, to say that the common-place term—Flour—had to the working people of Leeds, in 1846–47, the infinite interest of a necessity of life, which was scarce, dear, and bad. Yet in 1846 such flour as was to be had was 4s. per stone of 14 lbs. A stone of flour is sold now in Leeds from 1s. 6d. to 1s. 7d., which denotes a better condition of subsistence for the working class.

There was also great depression in trade then. The outlook was as dreary as that of Noah from the Ark before the waters subsided. The state of the working class was as monotonous as despair. As Charles Matthews, the elder,

once said, there was "nothing stirring but stagnation." Yes, there was something unobserved stirring—it was adulteration. Dr. Adam Clarke, in a long-remembered phrase, said, "Leeds was the Garden of the Lord." But, alas, in those days no trading conscience grew among the plants of that garden, and millers sold flour which would give a boa constrictor indigestion and reduce him to ribs and skin. Before the days of co-operative stores the poor man's stomach was the waste-paper basket of the State, into which everything was thrown which the well-to-do classes could not or would not eat. The state of things described demanded action, and men of action were found, but not where they were expected, nor were they the kind of men anybody looked to as likely to originate a great change. The insurgents were the Benyon Mill men, who issued forth with the following singular address, headed—

HOLBECK ANTI-CORN MILL ASSOCIATION.

To the Working Classes of Leeds and its vicinity.

We, the workpeople of Messrs. Benyon and Co.'s mill, Holbeck, in the county of York, having experienced much trouble and sorrow of late in ourselves and families, in consequence of the exorbitant price of flour, do judge it needful for us to take every precaution to preserve ourselves from the invasions of covetous and merciless men in future. In consequence thereof we deem it needful to enter into a combination to raise a subscription to the amount of twenty shillings, to be paid by each member in weekly instalments, to be determined on at a meeting to be held in a room behind the Union Tavern, on Monday, March 1st, 1847, at seven o'clock in the evening, for the purpose of renting a mill until the funds of the Society shall enable them to erect a mill of their own, which shall be the property of the subscribers, their heirs, executors, administrators, or assigns, for ever, in order to supply them with flour, and that only.

N.B.—The committee are wishful to raise 1,000 members for the purpose of carrying out this noble enterprise. They therefore call upon the working classes to attend the meeting, in order to look to their own welfare and the welfare of their families.

ROBERT WILSON AMBLER,
JOHN PARK,
JOSEPH DARLEY,
ROBERT AMBLER,
JAMES JACKSON,
WILLIAM WARD,
JOSEPH NOWELL,

THE COMMITTEE.

February 25th, 1847.

The Benyon Mill men, as they appeared in their day, are worth preserving in portraits where such exist. The first who signed the circular address was Robert Wilson Ambler, who had an oval head of the Sir Joshua Reynolds type. His face



[*Braithwaite, Leeds, photographer*
ROBERT WILSON AMBLER.

is expressive of shrewdness and alertness. He was just the man to make a "stirring speech," which he did to the hundred who met at the Union Tavern.

It will strike the reader of to-day as odd that the insurgent flax spinners should seek to set up an "Anti-Corn Mill Associa-

tion," which suggests that they were against a corn mill, when all the while they were trying to set up a corn mill. Mr. Fawcett conjectures that the term "Anti Mill" was used to



JOHN PARK.

designate opposition to the private millers of the day,* who, as the Benyon men say, brought "much sorrow and trouble

* The Hull Co-operative Corn Mill of the last century, bore the name "Anti Mill" for the same reason probably. The Benyon men may have heard of it.

to them and their families." These workmen, taking to public affairs and inviting the co-operation of the town, were confident innovators, as will be thought to-day, to proclaim the name of their employers as though they were cognisant, or concurring in the step taken by their men. The Benyons were of the Tory persuasion, but of the tolerant type. In many towns a step of the kind in question led, in early days of the the social movement, to dismissal of men. It was, however, a pleasant custom in Leeds for workmen to describe themselves by the name of their employers, as "Kitson's men," or as "Fairbairn's men" do now.

The portrait of John Park (page 9), the second who signed the circular, is that of a solid man of vigour with an impassable look, and features wonderfully resembling the Rev. John Angell James, my pastor for five years in Carr's Lane Chapel, Birmingham. Before reading the name I thought it was Mr. James. There is no "sorrow or trouble" in Park's face.

The readers will see that these adventurous flax spinners constituted themselves as an "association" before they were associated. They announced themselves as "We, the work-people of Messrs. Benyon and Co., Meadow Lane, Holbeck, in the county of York." There was no mistake as to who they were, and where they were, and any person wanting to communicate with them need not go running all over England. They were to be found in "Holbeck, in the county of York." It would appear that they regarded Holbeck as a more important, or better known, place than Leeds. They announced their intention to take precaution, "every precaution," they said, which was quite beyond their power, to preserve themselves "from the invasions of covetous and merciless traders," and from the "exorbitant price of flour." They therefore determined "to enter into a combination to raise a subscription of twenty shillings from each member, to be paid in weekly instalments as might be determined upon, at a meeting to be held in a room behind the Union Tavern, on Monday, March 1st, 1847, at seven o'clock in the evening." The business of the meeting was stated to be the "renting of a mill until the funds of the institution enabled them to build one." They already regarded the "combination," not yet combined, as an "Institution." If poor in means they were affluent in terms. Then followed an outburst of legal language, declaring that

the mill of their own should be the property of the subscribers, "their heirs, executors, administrators, or assigns."

The working class of Leeds fifty years ago had hardly thought of "heirs," as they were not sure of having anything



JOSEPH NOWELL.

to leave them except the poorhouse. Of "executors and administrators" they had very scant knowledge, and of "assigns" few of them had the slightest idea. They did not even foresee or know that they would have bran and straw to

sell, and bound themselves "to supply flour to their members, and that only." The law made one limit, and they made a larger one upon which battles were fought. The "Union Tavern," the place of meeting, did not require any street being given as to where it was situated, nor did it need to be specified as being in the "County of York." Everybody in "Leeds and its vicinity" were assumed to know where the "Union Tavern" was.

Joseph Nowell (page 11), the last name on the Benyon circular calling the first meeting, has an honest, hard-working look, as though he had shared the "trouble and sorrow brought into working-men's families," by dear and pernicious flour.

On the 1st of March about 100 persons attended the meeting, which comprised persons from all parts of the town and neighbourhood. Mr. William Eggleston was chairman. Mr. R. W. Ambler and others made "stirring remarks" upon the price and the extent of the adulteration of flour. It was resolved to call a public meeting, to be held in the Tabernacle Schoolroom, Meadow Lane, on the 7th of March, 1847, and bills were posted giving the town notice to that effect. At this meeting about 1,000 persons were present in the room, and many more were refused admission "because the place was full," which shows that social innovation of some kind was well about. The objects of the meeting were fully explained

The meeting understood their business, which was to provide funds for incidental expenses in forming the Society, and they agreed to subscribe a shilling each. It was arranged that if the project succeeded the shilling should be counted into the shares taken. Thus the originators of the great Society began upon the principle of a ready-money movement.

The meeting ended by appointing a committee to carry forward its purposes.

The First Committee of Organisation.

[1847.]

CHAPTER III.

AT the commencement of the new movement an unreflecting reader thinks all the merit of it belongs to the new actors who appear upon the scene. Great merit does belong to them, because they are the first to put into action what others have merely talked about. Yet let it not be supposed that those who only talked, even the least influential, did nothing. They disseminated, in the humble circles where they moved, a wholesome discontent at the existence of an avoidable evil. If a man does not know, or does not see what to do to effect a needed change, his duty is to do what he can. Any man who has no opinion on a question on which he ought to have an opinion, is a poor creature. If he has an opinion he can find some means of expressing it, if only to his neighbour, and if he is not on speaking terms with his neighbour he can express it to his wife, who usually has generous enthusiasm, and will soon express her opinion to somebody else. The result is that when a few intrepid men take the field they find people everywhere who understand their object, and the bolder sort of those thus informed join the new standard. The French regard all present at a meeting as "assisting" at it. This is true. Even those who make part of a crowd at the door, who cannot get in, add to the influence of the meeting, since it indicates to all observers interest in the question discussed inside. Milton says, "They also serve who only stand and wait." This is so,

provided they stand in the right place, and are at hand to help when called upon. Thus it came to pass that when the next public meeting was called it was crowded.

A contagious or similar activity soon manifested itself elsewhere. One meeting was held in Newtown. A deputation was sent from the Meadow Lane Committee to a meeting held at Tulip Inn, Newtown, to make arrangements to meet together. It was decided to hold a public meeting in Leeds, in the Court House (now the Post-office),* which took place by the friendly courtesy of the Mayor, George Goodman, Esq. This was the first public Corn Mill meeting held in the town of Leeds. It took place at the end of March, or early in April, 1847. Public interest in the question had so increased that from 1,200 to 1,400 persons were present. The *Leeds Times*, edited by Robert Nicol, the poet, always had sympathy for the unrecognised interest of the people, and took cognisance of the meeting, and recommended working men to join the proposed society. Friendly reports and descriptions of the public proceedings of the Society have appeared in the *Leeds Mercury*, whose files we have had to refer to, for facts and dates for these pages. At the first meeting to receive subscriptions, 433 persons paid an entrance fee of one shilling, and in two months no less than 1,023 had joined the movement. This shows unusual enthusiasm of a practical business kind, that so many persons of small means should subscribe so readily that an unknown and doubtful manufacturing experiment should be tried.

The names of the committee appointed to organise the new movement were the following :—

R. Penrose.	James Robinson.
Samuel Haigh.	Jno. Hebden.
S. Summerscale.	Chas. Fitzroy.
John Taylor.	Samuel Wright.
G. W. Thomas.	W. Lamb.
W. Eggleston.	Henry Thompson.
J. E. Craven.	M. Jackson.
G. Walker.	Thomas Atkinson.
John Smith.	James Hole.
J. Swaine.	D. Green.
Jas. Smithson.	James Booth.
Jno. Walton.	A. Beanland.

* Recently demolished.

Two of the leaders of the Redemption Society—David Green and James Hole—were present at this meeting, and were at once incorporated in the committee, which thus acquired the elements of higher progress than Benyon men had in their minds. It is a notable fact that not one of the seven flax spinners are on the new committee appointed to carry forward their project. It appears to have passed out of their hands, but to them belongs the credit of originating the great working-class union, and of passing it on. They have an historic place among the founders of the "Anti Mill" movement.

This committee of arrangement, like the one which issued the first address, met at Mrs. Walker's Coffee House, Duncan Street, and devoted all the time they could command to setting a corn mill in motion.

The Redemption men now among them, knew that a co-operative store was simpler, easier, and more manageable. The Rochdale store was only three years old, and not much to refer to then. Very likely, or probably, the suggestion was not made, or not urged. Mr. Green and Mr. Hole had been put upon the committee to aid in carrying out the mill idea, and they did.

The local need was honest flour. There was zeal for that. It was right to take advantage of ready-made enthusiasm for a useful, if difficult object, rather than attempt something else easier, but for which zeal had to be created.

People were moved by indignation in commencing with a flour mill. Probably few understood the different kinds of knowledge necessary for such an undertaking—knowledge of which spinners, weavers, mechanics, and shoe makers were entirely ignorant. Or if any understood the difficulties of the enterprise they were not dismayed, and insisted on a corn mill.

Dr. Charles Mackay, the poet, in the days before he became a copperhead,* called upon "men of thought and men of action to clear the way." The Leeds Pioneers were of this description, for seldom if ever has a new movement been conducted with more celerity than marked the progress of the Leeds Society.

* A dubious reptile of that colour. Its name was given to uncertain American politicians who professed to be for the Union but argued against it.

By July they obtained the certificate of their rules from the Registrar. They succeeded in obtaining the Britannia Corn Mill, in Saville Street, Wellington Street, which belonged to Mr. Fieldhouse, an appropriate name for a corn miller. This mill they worked for fifteen months.

The first corn was ground in September, and the first flour made from this corn was reserved for the tea party, held in the Music Hall, Albion Street, October 28th, 1847. Thus, within seven months from the first subscription being paid to the Benyon Mill men, a corn mill was taken, corn ground, bread made and eaten at a public tea party. Clearly the pioneers of Leeds meant business, and their successors have meant it ever since. At this time it was found necessary to close the books against the admission of more members, the mill not being able to supply flour to more persons than had already joined the Society. By the end of December, that is, nine months after commencing their association of millers, they had bought nearly 1,800 quarters of wheat, at an average of fifty-nine shillings a quarter. In addition they bought barley, beans, Indian corn, and other cereals. A Special Committee prepared rules for the administration of the affairs of the Society—rules so remarkable and unparalleled that they deserve distinct consideration.

The Wonderful Rules.

[1847.]

CHAPTER IV.

THE Duncan Street Committee were prudent men. They drew up a code of rules, and employed Mr. William Middleton, solicitor, to render them in accordance with the Friendly Societies Act. They were afterwards submitted to the Attorney-General, Sir John Jervis, for his opinion. It is difficult to conceive why this should be done, seeing there was Mr. Tidd Pratt, Registrar of Friendly Societies, whose legal judgment would be exercised upon them, and whose signature would give them authority. All the while the committee did not trust Sir John Jervis, but appointed a "special number of persons to watch him" lest he should pervert the spirit of the rules, which he was very likely to do. The rules were duly certified by John Tidd Pratt, on the 8th of July, 1847, and surprising rules they were. One was "That no member shall receive more flour than is necessary for his own family." Who was to ascertain how much was "necessary"? It would employ a committee of doctors, all their time, to determine this. Most families eat too much meat, and take too little bread; some families are given to vegetarianism, and take bread in excess; some families are teetotal, and they eat more bread than beer drinkers. Mr. Cobden found out this when he held a Peace Conference on the continent. The second time the hotel-keepers charged a

much higher price for dinner than formerly, on the ground that most of the delegates were temperance people, who not only drank no ale or wine, which mainly made the profit, but ate much more in consequence, which increased the loss. An inquisition would be necessary into the habits of every family under the rule cited. It is one of many examples that no persons ever think of inflicting such restrictions upon working men as they inflict upon themselves, before the day of education comes.

Another marvellous rule was as follows:—"Any member who shall sell or make goods for sale, of the flour or meal received from this Society, shall, on conviction of either of the above offences, be fined *ten shillings* for the first time, and be excluded on a repetition thereof." No act to regulate the sale and use of poisons has more stringent conditions than this rule for the sale and use of flour.

The object of the Society was to make flour, and the prosperity of the business depended upon the amount it could sell. Here was a rule expressly framed to prevent it doing business, and if any poor member had a clever, intelligent wife who knew how to cook and increase the resources of her family by making digestible tarts or pork pies—very scarce in Leeds in those days, and scarce in other towns still, of a digestible kind—it was an offence under the rules of these working men to be punished by fine and expulsion. The framers of these rules had a very narrow outlook, and the Attorney-General could not have done worse for them than they did for themselves.

A further rule had democratic sense in it, and is entitled to respect. It sets forth—"That any member refusing to fill the office of president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, director, or auditor, or resigning such office without sufficient cause, shall be fined two shillings and sixpence."

This rule recognised the equality of the right and the duty of every member of the Society to take part in its administration, and necessitates education as part of its policy, as without it, members cannot be qualified to fill the offices to which they may be called. Being ignorant, they would retard or ruin it.

The members of the new Society had no idea the day would come when it would be a point of distinction to be elected to serve it. Mr. Hole and Mr. Green had been conversant with

rule-making for many societies in previous years, but in this case their judgment must have been overruled, and it must have been in deference to the opinion of the great majority that they concurred in sending these singular rules to the Registrar. It was under these rules that the first directors were appointed.





The First Directors.

[1847.]

CHAPTER V.

THEY who begin a movement make it, and on this principle the first directors are entitled to a place in this history.

The main rule for the government of the Society and election of officers was as follows:—"That this Society shall be managed by a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and twenty directors, who shall be elected in the following manner, viz.: Six members shall be nominated by the directors, from whom the president shall be chosen. Six others in like manner, from whom to choose a vice-president. After the first election the vice-president shall at all times succeed the president. The directors shall also nominate six additional members, from whom three shall be chosen; one of the latter to go out of office every succeeding six months, when three others shall be nominated as above, and one selected by (in every case) the members present at the half-yearly meeting. Twenty members shall also be chosen as directors, ten of whom shall retire half-yearly, and ten others elected in their stead." The rule has only historic interest now as showing the early device for electing directors.

Organisation was soon afloat, and the following persons, in various capacities, were elected the first board of management*:

* From an old minute book in possession of the Society.

Trustees—

THOMAS NUNNELEY, ESQ., Surgeon, Leeds.
MATTHEW HALL, ESQ., Surgeon, Wortley.
Councillor GEORGE ROBSON, Leeds.
Councillor WILLIAM BROOK, Leeds.

Directors, &c.—

Mr. JOHN SMITH, President.
,, JOHN TAYLOR, Vice-President.
,, RICHARD PENROSE, Treasurer.

Mr. JOHN WALTOR.	Mr. WILLIAM WRAY.
,, SAM. SUMMERSCALE.	,, JAMES WALKER.
,, GEORGE WALKER.	,, JOSEPH WORSNOP.
,, JOHN HEBDEN.	,, JOHN CAVE.
,, JAMES ROBINSON.	,, MATTHEW FAWCETT.
,, JOHN OXLEY.	,, GEORGE DENHAM.
,, JOSEPH MATHERS.	,, WILLIAM SWALLOW.
,, JOSEPH LAWSON.	,, SAMUEL HAY.
,, SQUIRE FARRAR.	,, JAMES ALLAN.
,, RICHARD HOLMES.	,, BENJAMIN WARD.

Secretary—WILLIAM EMMERSON.

Arbitrators—

DARNTON LUPTON, ESQ., Leeds.
JOSEPH CLIFF, ESQ., Wortley.
JOSEPH OGDEN MARCH, ESQ., Woodhouse Lane.
JOHN WALES SMITH, ESQ., York Place.
THOMAS FOSTER SAGAR, ESQ., West Street

Auditors—

Mr. ZEBEDEE SWAIN, Leeds.
,, THOMAS ATKINSON, Leeds.
,, WILLIAM BIRKHEAD. Kirkstall.

The rules were only certified on the 8th of July, and on the 31st the first meeting of directors took place, when they advertised for a corn mill, a step not without peril, for they gave the millers public notice to be on their guard, as an enemy was in the field. In London even, when we required to build a hall about the same time, we found that not a square

inch of ground on which to plant a walking-stick could be bought. No one would sell or let, when our purpose was known, which had been imprudently published. Yet our purpose was to establish an institution for what is now known as social and co-operative advocacy. Of course, the millers of Leeds took the alarm, and every obstacle their ingenuity or their interest could put in the way of the directors, they set in motion. Nevertheless, as we have seen, the directors overcame every obstacle. They obtained a mill and ground corn in it.

The Society, at first, was co-operative only in a very elementary sense. It was a cheap selling store. It had no arrangement for making profit, and of course had no idea of distributing it—whereas distribution of profit has been the strong incentive of growth in co-operative societies. The first flour-mill rule bound the directors "to sell as near *prime cost* as possible," which left no margin for profit. They were directed in the first rule "to buy corn as good as possible." But Rule 12 said that "there shall be such sorts of flour made at the Society's mill as the majority of the members shall decide." "Such sorts" included seconds. The terms would allow cheap kinds—or adulterating kinds, if the majority of the members should so decide. It is to the credit of the directors that they never attempted nor permitted any evasion of the pledge of purity. It is also to the credit of the members that they never proposed any departure from their profession of good faith towards the public.

The reader will see how many were the contests subsequent directors engaged in, to keep the Society true to purity in flour. As persons joined the Society knowing nothing and caring less for principle, but impetuous for cheapness at any cost of truth in trade, the directors were ever in battle array for the honour of the Society. Those who would lower the Society to the level of an ordinary shop, would have succeeded had it not been for the honourable steadfastness of the directors from time to time. Some directors, it will be found, who strenuously urged a certain course should be taken for the progress of the Society, were dismissed for doing it; but the members obtained enlightenment by it, and pursued the very course they had dismissed their directors for recommending to them.

A foremost advocate of social justice in our time, Mr. Ruskin, has expressed a policy which may be taken as describing that which the directors have pursued more or less to this day: "The simplest and clearest definition of economy, whether public or private, means the wise management of labour, and it means this mainly in three senses—first, in *applying* your labour rationally; secondly, in *preserving* its produce carefully; lastly, *distributing* its produce seasonably."

Mr. Ruskin's scheme of economical policy is for the State, in which profits are neither made nor needed, as where all produce is "seasonably distributed" all life is profit. Since we are not in that Utopia yet, men have to unite in societies to control and share the profit made by purchase or by labour. In these directions the voices of the directors have oft been heard. How this has been done will be seen very clearly in the Chronicles of the Society from year to year. Great difficulties have been encountered, great exercise of patience has been exacted, but the march of the Society has ever been onward. The motto of the Leeds Society, like that of the City of Birmingham, always has been, and is, "Forward."

It has been held as remarkable that many of the most eminent Jewish doctors were humble tradesmen, and it is not less notable in its way that the men who have proved successful directors of the Society, came from the ordinary industrial ranks in the town. Notwithstanding, as high a quality of prevision, organisation, administration and judgment, has been manifested by them as any directorships have ever shown.

The Fifty-Eight Pioneers of Leeds.

[1847.]

CHAPTER VI.

THE following are the names of the Fifty-eight Pioneers of Leeds, all of whom held office, or performed some duty of importance in the interest of the Society, in the year 1847:—

3 Allan, James.
1 Ambler, Robert Wilson.
1 Ambler, Robert.
2 Atkinson, Thomas.
2 Beanland, A.
3 Birkhead, William.
2 Booth, James.
3 Cave, Jno.
3 Cliff, Esq., Joseph.
2 Craven, J. E.
1 Darley, Joseph.
3 Denham, G.
2 Eggleston, W.
3 Emmerson, William (R).
3 Farrar, Sqr.
3 Fawcett, M.
2 Fitzroy, Charles.
2 Green, David.
2 Haigh, Samuel.
3 Hay, Samuel.
2 Hebden, John (R).
2 Hole, James.
2 Holmes, Richard.
1 Jackson, James.
2 Jackson, M.
Kitchen, William (MR).
2 Lamb, W.
3 Lawson, Josh.
3 Lupton, Esq., D.
3 March, Esq., J. O.
3 Mathers, Joseph.
1 Nowell, Joseph.
3 Oxley, John (R).
1 Park, John.
3 Penrose, Richard (MR).
2 Robinson, James (R).
3 Robinson, John.
3 Sagar, Esq., E. T. F.

2 SMITH, JOHN (R).
3 SMITH, J. W.
SMITHSON, JOHN (R).
2 SMITHSON, JAMES.
2 SUMMERSCALE, SAM. (MR).
3 SWAINE, ZEBEDEE (R).
3 SWALLOW, WILLIAM.
2 TAYLOR, JOHN (MR).
2 THOMAS, G. W.
2 THOMPSON, HENRY.
2 WALKER, G. (R).
3 WALKER, JOHN.
3 WALKER, JAMES.
WALTER, JOHN (R).
2 WALTOR, JOHN.
1 WARD, WILLIAM.
3 WARD, B.
3 WORSNOP, JOS.
3 WRAY, W.
2 WRIGHT, SAMUEL.

The foregoing persons were members of the first two committees and first board of directors, who originated and organised the Great Leeds Society. It was not until thirty-three years after its commencement that the names of these founders were collected together. Fifty years have elapsed before they were classified and characterised as they are in these pages. When the Rochdale Society began, the town had only a population of 27,000. Leeds, when its co-operative society began, had a population of 164,000, six times larger than Rochdale, and its pioneers are double those of Rochdale, *plus* two. Rochdale had 28, Leeds 58. The seven names marked (1) were the seven Benyon Mill men who issued the first manifesto. The 25 names marked (2) were members of the second committee. The 21 names marked (3) were members of the first board of directors. Those names in the list having the letter (R) after their name in parenthesis, also were members of the "Provisional Committee," responsible for the rules, and whose names are published in the Rules of 1847, which were invented and drawn in that year. They were printed and published by Samuel Moxon, Queen's Court, Briggate, July, 1847.* The names to which are attached the letters (MR) were the four flour members who signed the enrolled copy of the rules. The name of J. Parker occurs only in the minutes of March, 1847, as appointed to make a bargain with the owners of the mill.

Most of the names occur again and again, in after years, as presidents, secretaries, directors, and active members of the

* There is another edition of the rules purporting to be printed "by Joseph Barker, printer and publisher, Wortley," bearing the same date, "July, 1847."

Society. Robert Ambler, one of the Benyon men, is among them, as will be seen as this narrative proceeds. David Green, whose name the reader has seen, was a well-known disciple of Robert Owen, and, as we have said, founder of the Redemption Society, which had subscribers in most parts of Great Britain. It was the last attempt to advocate and establish an industrial self-supporting community on principles of equity, after the manner of Robert Owen.

James Hole won distinction in letters. He was the first translator of Strass Leben Jesu, and afterwards secretary of the Chambers of Commerce. His last work was "Railways and the State," a volume of remarkable fiscal research and ability. His name will occur again in this story.

Sq. Farrar is the same name, though another person, as Squire Farrar, of Bradford, who was always in the front of every liberal movement until his death at the age of 93. Sq Farrar is a name of good omen.



Historical Chronicle year by year.

1847.

CHAPTER VII.

A NOVEL PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION—CO-OPERATORS IN A MINORITY.

THIS was the Founders' year, to which five chapters have been already devoted. The date is repeated here to complete the consecutive account of fifty years. Ten years before this date the writer had been about the country speaking and counselling co-operative efforts in one form or another—some for the establishment of self-supporting communities, some for store trading—and was therefore familiar with the agitation current in Leeds in those days. It was a year before the revolutionary year of 1848 that the Leeds flour movement began. Looking back to that time now, it seems strange that Leeds working men deferred so long to take their own affairs into their own hands, and still more strange that they should come to excel all other co-operative societies in extent.

The plan of distribution of the flour made was different from any other corn mill. It was to appoint shopkeepers to be their flour sellers. Numerous applications for agencies were received, and the selection was made with regard to distances from each other so that they might not overlap, and each agent have a fair field for increasing his sales. The agents had to pay all money, taken for flour, into the bank. By the end of 1847 the agents had paid in, to the Society's account, no less a sum than £4,986. The total payments

made by the Society to the end of 1847 were £6,086, leaving a balance in the bank in favour of the Society of £937, minus one penny. This was not a bad turnover for working men to make in the first seven months in their attempt to manage a new business, with the object of improving their condition. In addition, they had the important advantage of having wholesome flour, free from plaster of Paris,* a favourite adulteration with some flour dealers, as the reader will learn.

The conditions to which the flour agents had to conform will be found in the transactions of 1858, when unforeseen troubles brought them into discussion.

Originally, the Flour Mill Society was a mere commercial association, with a majority of members who knew little of co-operation, or of the amity and social toleration it teaches and implies. It always takes time to acquire co-operative ideas. These ideas had to be learned, and the learners were not all at once easy to deal with. From the first year until now, how vast a change in spirit, in character, and business outlook! The reader will see this as the story proceeds year by year. The evolution of principle and organisation is, to many, interesting and instructive reading.

1848.

TRENCHANT RESOLUTIONS—A FORTY WEEKS' LEVY—NO POWER TO BUY LAND—A TIMELY DISCOVERY—DEADLY ADULTERATION—DR. CHORLEY'S COURAGE—THE PERIL OF CHEAP SELLING—CO-OPERATIVE STORES A PUBLIC NECESSITY.

THIS year opened with enterprise. In February two important resolutions were passed. First, that a corn mill be either built or bought as soon as possible. Second, that a levy of £1 be made upon each member to raise funds to either build or purchase a corn mill and fit it up for immediate use. This levy was to be paid in eight monthly instalments of 2s. 6d.

* Varied by a white earth known as "terra alba."

This denoted practical enthusiasm. The members resolved not only to have opinions about their own affairs, but to sustain them by substantial subscriptions. For £1 must have seemed a large sum to many of them, and eventually proved to be too much. It amounted to sixpence a week, to be kept up for forty weeks. Whether the directors had in their minds the forty years the Children of Israel spent in the wilderness does not appear, but the flour mill men got through their wilderness and entered their Promised Land.

The first report of the Mill Society from March 4th to July 28th was issued this year. In March, Mr. J. Smith, the president, Mr. R. Penrose, treasurer, and Mr. J. Parker were appointed to make a bargain with Mr. Blackburn, solicitor to the firm of Fenton, Murray, and Jackson, owners of the mill. Before it was bought counsel's opinion was prudently taken upon the question whether the Society could hold freehold property. The opinion was that it could only be held by trustees, there being no law then, as there is now, enabling societies to hold property in their corporate capacity.

From January to June the Society paid nearly £11,000 for wheat and £518 to the new mill account, from which it may be inferred the mill was bought. Other payments of more than £1,000 were made, making total payments for the half year £11,930. From July to December there was paid for wheat £10,492. To the new mill account there was paid £960 and other payments amounting to £763, making a total of payments of £12,216. Thus the power of paying increased, and there was punctuality and promptitude in doing it. Accounts were made up half-yearly, and the amount of business summarised half-yearly.

The report bore the names of W. Birkhead, T. Murgatroyd, and W. Eggleston, as auditors. This was the first signed report. It was found that the profit made during the half year ending June 30th, 1848, had been £70.

The flour agents increased their payments into the bank to £11,632. Thus the Society early learned the art of going from success to success.

At this time an occurrence happened which gave the Society an impetus, and proved not only its necessity but the wisdom of starting it. There was bad flour and dear flour sold in the town, but nobody knew it was dangerous flour.

One Dr. James Chorley had the honourable courage to call the attention of the authorities to the pernicious nature of the flour sold in his neighbourhood,* which was shown to be adulterated with plaster of Paris to the extent of fourteen ounces in 20 stones of flour. When the flour seller's premises were searched two casks and two bags of plaster of Paris were found. The adulterating flour seller bought his flour at 38s. per sack of twenty stones. The selling price, retail, was 2s. per stone, and he sold it at 1s. 10d., realising 36s. 8d. per sack. Thus he sold his flour at less than he paid for it pure. He made his profit by adulteration. This discovery brought a great accession of members to the Mill Company, as there were no other dealers whom they could trust. Thus the Leeds co-operators learned what cheap selling meant. There was fraud in it somewhere and somehow, unknown to the victims of the cheap-selling tradesmen. Many co-operators are ignorant of this fact in these days.

In those years there were no definite laws against adulteration as there are now, no public analysts to whom suspicious commodities might be sent to ascertain their genuineness, nor had working people the knowledge or the means of getting up the necessary evidence for convictions, nor were there magistrates much disposed to listen to them if they appeared before them. Dr. Chorley, the medical practitioner whom we have mentioned, found a large number of his patients seriously ill who had bought flour at one or other of two shops managed by a flour dealer and his wife. The inquiring doctor had himself analysed the flour bought by his patients, and found it to be most pernicious. One poor old lady was so ill for eleven days that her life was despaired of. The knavish flour-seller was named Vickers. Conviction took place. Mr. Edward Baines (afterwards Sir Edward), as presiding magistrate, spoke in strong terms of the serious offence of which they had been guilty. On three separate charges he inflicted the penalty of £20 each, and the miller's wife in one charge, making £80 of fines in all, which, not being paid, the flour dealer was imprisoned for three months, and his wife for one.

* The doctor's best patients were probably among the middle class of shopkeepers, who would be likely to keep clear of his consulting room. It was given in evidence before the Parliamentary Committee of 1856 that the shopkeepers held together against any assailant.

About the same time the coffee trick came to light. Not only was coffee adulterated, but the chicory, which mainly adulterated it, was itself adulterated, and a cheap-selling coffee dealer's shop in North Street was entered by the police—through "information" they had received. Treacle, bran, Venetian red, and mustard were mixed together and baked: and this was vended as chicory. But for lack of evidence no conviction took place.

These facts pointed to the necessity for a co-operative store, to protect the members from fraud and danger in other commodities as well as flour; but as yet the members were unable to see so far.

1849.

THE DOUBLE SHARE RULE RESCINDED—THE FIRST ACCIDENT—A FRIENDLY MILLER—BANKERS' CONFIDENCE—GOLDEN WORDS OF COUNSEL.

THE levy made upon the members of £1, in addition to the £1 share each member was required to subscribe, proved to be beyond the means of many of the members, who said that the forty shillings were too much for working men to raise, even by instalments, and in October the directors called a meeting to consider the best means of raising more capital. A resolution was passed rescinding the one which raised the shares from £1 to £2. The result was, that more members entered than made up the difference of the money returned to those who had paid more than £1, and in a few months all the money was repaid to members who were entitled to receive any.

This year there was an accident to the main shaft of the corn mill engine, which caused the mill to stand for some time. This was a serious misfortune to the Society, as the directors had great difficulty in getting corn ground elsewhere. The millers had their opportunity and refused any aid to their new adversaries, whom they had not forgiven for setting up an

"Anti-corn mill." At last, one more generous than the others agreed to help the Society out of its difficulty—at the same time he charged a shilling a quarter more than the Society could grind it for, but as it was considerably lower than any one else would grind for the Society, his terms were accepted and his help appreciated. Members were cheered by learning that the profit made the first half year ending June, 1849, was £135. Notwithstanding, in view of the need which might come for further machinery, or possible loss, the directors took the precaution of asking their bankers, William Williams, Brown and Co., Commercial Street, whether they would make them an advance should occasion for it arise. The bankers, who had discernment as well as friendliness, expressed confidence in the Society and offered an advance of £1,500, but it never was required.

The fourth half-yearly meeting of what was then entitled the "Leeds District Flour Mill Society," was held July 25th, in the Court House, of which they had the use by the courtesy of the Mayor.

This year an Annual Report was published of four leaves duodecimo, previous reports being on much larger paper. It was presented at the Court House. In the report ending December, it was stated that the Leeds Flour Society was the largest in the kingdom. Thus early it attained a supremacy which it has never lost.

The directors who retired this year left memorable words of counsel to their successors, which ought to be printed in words of gold, and hung in every store in the land and in every co-operative office and workshop. Their words were :— "At whatever cost, instruct the buyer to buy the *best* of wheat [or material] the market affords, and to bear in mind that the working classes of this district should have the *best* and *purest* bread [or other commodities] possible to be manufactured. The *quality* should be *first*, the *price* only the *second* object."* The words in brackets *are additions made* by the writer to show that the spirit of the injunction is universal in co-operation.

This remarkable passage shows how clear and sound was the early co-operative spirit. The reader will do well to look

* This was Archbishop Whately's principle, who said, "It makes all the difference in the world whether we put Truth in the first place or put it in the second place."

back to the names of this Board of Directors to see who they were that spoke so wisely. Since that day there have been too many members of co-operative stores who have cared mainly for cheapness and profit, forgetful that honesty in business, in quality as well as in quantity, and assured purity of food, or assured excellence in any commodity, are the first conditions of co-operative trade and co-operative integrity.

1850.

CONTENTIOUSNESS CREEPING ABOUT—THE IDEAS WHICH INCITE IT.

THIS year the contentiousness, common in the commencement of co-operation, asserted itself in Leeds. Indeed, in those years a wandering speaker in the town thought Leeds social reformers excelled in the capacity of disagreeing with themselves. The members not only criticised the vicissitudes of business but criticised each other—not for his improvement but for his confusion. More or less, this is done everywhere among those under the influence of what we used to call "the old world spirit;" which regarded everybody as personally responsible for his peculiarities, which he was supposed to have wilfully chosen and wilfully retained. It was one of the main objects of early co-operative lectures to found a new art of association, and those who founded co-operation under Robert Owen, had enduring enthusiasm which no difficulty dismayed—no disaster chilled.

The principal business item recorded of this year is the honest one that £500 more was paid towards the new mill account. A larger-sized report was printed, giving for the first time the board of management and twenty names of directors, Edwin Gaunt being secretary.

1851.

"SOMETHING WRONG"—DEMOCRATIC DUTY IN COMPLAINT—CO-OPERATIVE QUALITIES—IRRECONCILABLES RECONCILED BY A REAL AUDIT—MR. PLINT'S MASTERLY EXAMINATION—HIS WISE AND BOLD COUNSEL.

THIS year a directors' report appeared—argumentative, explanatory, and instructive. In the four years of the existence of the Society to this date (1851), the price of corn had fluctuated from 1s. to 1s. 7d. a stone, which must have given trouble to directors and perturbed the minds of members, who would suspect overcharges. Nevertheless, the Society made profit and increased its members to 2,997. Like prudent men, the directors insured their property for £2,000, notwithstanding that the premium reduced the dividend. Security is always a good investment.

Amid the many members allured by prospect of profit, but who had never caught the co-operative spirit, some began to express the opinion that there was "something wrong." Those who did not understand accounts were persuaded the balance sheets were wrong. In a democratic society, such as all co-operative societies are, explicitness of administration is indispensable—not only should those in control be honest, but they should be at the trouble to show they are so, and reasonable facilities should be open to every member for satisfying himself that his affairs are well conducted. For democratic confidence it is necessary that the business should be openly, not secretly conducted, as it is in a private concern. But at the same time this democratic advantage imposes upon members corresponding good faith, good patience, and good temper. They should entertain no suspicion until they have inquired, observed, and assured themselves that there is good ground for it. It is a fault of the first magnitude to make imputations against the honesty of any man, unless he who makes it is assured of its truth. What is not or cannot be proved should be regarded as non-existent. Before any open expression of adverse opinion is ventured upon, inquiry should be made of the committee or of the department responsible

for what is suspected to be wrong. Had such considerations been in the minds of members, the Leeds Society would have had smooth water to sail in, and have reached the port of prosperity long before it did. One thing members are very apt to forget is that shopmen, and all employed in a democratic society, are placed at a disadvantage compared with servants in a private firm. There they have only one, or perhaps two or three masters. In a Society like Leeds now, they have 37,000 masters. In some societies every member, because he is a joint master, virtually acts as one, and often speaks to those employed in a masterful way. Whereas complaints should be made, as far as possible, to the committee, and one of them should make representations and give directions. On the other hand, the duty of every officer, in any capacity, is to be civil to every member, and the duty of every member to be civil to him. Patience, forbearance, discrimination, and helpfulness are co-operative qualities. The best construction that can be put upon conduct are the virtues that make co-operative intercourse so pleasant to members, and those employed by them. It is these experiences which make the history of the Leeds Society so instructive to others. All the lights and shadows of co-operative association are reflected here. It in no way disquiets the living to learn that predecessors now dead, erred through lack of experience.

It is often said that the most "charitable" construction should be put on the acts of others. It is not "charity" but justice which is wanted in judging. Charity is condescension. Where there is justice in judgment, charity is rarely needed.

When members get dissatisfied and believe the accounts are deceptive, the business of the society begins to fall off. At this stage (1851) the Leeds Society had the advantage that it always has had—the advantage of having directors who conducted business in an honest, straightforward manner, and no disruption took place. But there were, nevertheless, some members whom apparently nothing could satisfy. There are irreconcilables in social life as well as in political life, and the executive wisely resolved that all accounts should be again thoroughly investigated by an outside, independent, responsible accountant of known capacity, who should also audit their books. Such a person was Mr. T. Plint, who was engaged, at a cost of £40, to examine and audit all the accounts of the

Society from the commencement in 1847 to the end of 1851. Mr. Plint's instructions were "not only to strictly examine the current balance sheet, but every previous balance sheet." The members elected a special committee to see the work done and report thereon. Mr. Plint very properly took an entirely independent way of his own. In due course he reported—

"1. All the calculations or castings out, whether of sales or purchases, have been checked.

"2. All additions whatever have also been examined in all the books.

"3. All the postings have been checked.

"4. All payments entered in the cash book have been compared with the vouchers.

"5. The bank account has been compared with the cash book, and also with the ledger receipts, credited to the various shopkeepers or customers of the Society, and I find the books *correct* and exhibiting great care and painstaking, as well as skill in their management. They also show indubitable proof of a careful audit. I have also examined the half-yearly cash and stock accounts, and they correctly represent the state of the Society's affairs at the respective periods. As the balance sheet drawn up by me from an independent analysis of the accounts for the entire four years harmonises with the half-yearly balance, it therefore virtually proves the accuracy of all the preceding ones."

This report was most conclusive, and had the effect of creating great confidence in the members, who asked the directors to have it printed and circulated throughout the Society.

Mr. Plint rendered a further service. He explained what improvement might be made in the books of a corn mill, by which some corn mills to this day might profit. Mr. Plint rendered still greater service. He included in his report advice to the Society, both as to practice and policy. Mr. Plint was a model auditor. I have seen, in an important society, an auditor who added to his report his opinion of improvements required for the security of its operations, and for better conformity to its principles, put down by rude and peremptory disapproval; it being considered no business of an auditor to give any such opinion, but to confine himself to the accuracy of the accounts put before him. Whereas it is the business of

an honest auditor not to be merely content with the account given to him, but to inquire for others which may be necessary for him to understand the solvency of the society. An audit which does not imply or include that knowledge, is false and fraudulent in its effect—as the Bankruptcy Court reveals to us every week. The professional auditor has a large range of knowledge and experience, and can see where a society is going wrong, of which the most honest-minded directors may not be aware. One passage from Mr. Plint's report is memorable for its wisdom and its guidance. He says:—"I am aware that the immediate and great object of the Society is to furnish a good article to its members, on cheaper terms than is done by individual action, and the ordinary processes of exchange. Whether those ends are secured or not may be tested by the simple process of comparison, as respects the article produced and its price; and on the supposition that these tests show favourably for the Society, it might be held enough to show by the accounts that the Society was adding to its capital yearly, without going into minute analysis. This, however, would be a dangerous procedure—dangerous because liable greatly to mislead. A co-operative society can only be safe whilst keeping pace in its general management and in the processes of manufacture with the competitive trader, and the fact that a society does so keep pace is only demonstrable by a careful comparison of cost of production and of mercantile profits. The chances of perpetuity are *nil* to a society which is so far behind the individual trader that it cannot keep its capital intact, and at the same time to supply its members with commodities at less price than the private dealer. The least favourable condition on which such a society can do this is that of equal economy of production, and equal skill in general management; if, indeed, to encounter the contingencies and vicissitudes of business affairs, the economy and skill ought not to be greater, rather than simply equal. It is evident, too, that before calculating the nett annual increment of capital, due allowance must be made for wear and tear of fixed capital, and provision made by a *reserve fund* to meet those extraordinary expenses which may arise from accident, the substitution of improved machines or motive power; and those other contingencies to which nearly all the manufacturing arts are liable. I need not point out the absolute necessity,

in order to the success of the society, not merely of satisfying the members at large, that its affairs are conducted with integrity, but also of demonstrating that, as a business concern and tested by admitted business principles, it rests on a safe and stable foundation." Not many societies find an auditor so wise and bold as Mr. Plint.

1852.

A REMARKABLE AUDIT—THE TROUBLE OF PURITY—DISADVANTAGE OF CHEAPNESS—DIVIDENDS SHOULD BE PALPABLE—CONCEALED PROFITS—REMUNERATIVE PRICES ADOPTED—CARE IN TERMS GOOD POLICY—THE OLD MAN AND HIS THREE STONES OF FLOUR.

THERE was better bookkeeping in the Leeds Society than has fallen to the lot of most societies in their earlier years. Though Mr. Plint arrived at his results by a different method from that on which the Society's books were kept, the conclusions he arrived at were precisely the same. It was certainly notable, seeing that the values to be estimated were so difficult as those of actual property and profits. Mr. Plint's audit was made in December, six months after the directors made their report to the members.

The directors had reported that the worth of the Society on July 1st, 1851, was.....	£4,278	13	3½
Mr. Plint found it to be.....	£4,278	18	3½
The directors show that there was due to subscriptions	£3,401	6	9
Mr. Plint shows that there was due...	£3,401	6	9
The directors show a profit of	£877	6	6½
Mr. Plint shows a profit of	£877	6	6½

The committee justly say that, considering Mr. Plint arrived at his results by an entirely separate and different analysis, the exact coincidence of both sets of figures was remarkable. In the transactions of a new business,

though its returns amounted to £90,000, there had not been a defalcation of sixpence. Some members had objected to the trade expenses. To them it was pointed out that some were peculiar to a co-operative society at its commencement—for instance, a greater number of officers, and expenses of public meetings. The number of officers diminish in time, but are indispensable at the beginning, as their vigilance promotes confidence as well as creates the habits of order. Publicity is a source of increase of members, the expense of which is nothing as compared with ordinary business advertising.

The names of the committee who thus vindicated the veracity of the bookkeeping and integrity of the Society were—Luke Pool, Thomas Atkinson, David Vaup, R. M. Carter, and E. Gaunt, secretary.

The Society had taken the wise resolution of insuring purity of the flour they sold, and no admixture deteriorated it. The flour was pure and unadulterated. The average cost of the grain purchased to grind into flour was higher than the average cost of grain in the whole country. It required great faith in principle, great courage to do this, and the directors had the courage. The common principle of commercial business is to buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest. The directors followed the better rule of buying in the best market and supplying the poorest member with the best quality of food, which working people in Leeds had never had before. This unseen benefit did not tell upon unintelligent members. Their eyes were fixed upon mere cheapness. Their own health and that of their families were not thought of by them. In many houses disease and death from impure food were notorious facts in the town, before the People's Mill was established. From these calamities the homes of members were exempted, but the ignorant among new members gave little heed to this. That is why an educational fund, which did not exist then, was wanted. As Canon Kingsley said, "Cheapness is nastiness." But a man requires some intelligence to recognise nastiness, and dislike it. Besides, as the committee had found out, this very purity of food was against them. Its appearance was disliked. There was an uninstructed preference for white flour. The members had no experience and no knowledge of the appearance of pure flour. The women did

not like the colour of it. They did not know that the competitive miller did not scruple to produce whiteness by the adulteration of alum. But the intelligence of Leeds was not lower than that of other towns. For in those days the middle class, as a rule, knew neither the colour nor the taste of pure food. Their taste had never been educated, as the taste of co-operators is now. A friend of mine, Mr. George Huggett, secretary of the Westminster Reform Association, opened a coffee shop in Lambeth, that workmen might have genuine coffee in the early morning on going to their workshops. But, when they tasted it, they were indignant. They did not like the appearance of it, they did not like the colour of it, they did not like the aroma of it. They had never seen pure coffee nor tasted it. They did not know that what they drank was adulterated with vile ingredients. My friend had to close his shop; burnt beans, glucose, and mustard to give it a little pungency, were preferred by his customers.

It took two years to educate the taste of many of the Leeds members before they became reconciled to genuineness. It has taken longer elsewhere.

In one respect the earlier directors had put their successors at a disadvantage from the beginning. They had pledged them to sell not only genuine flour, but at a *cheaper price*, whereas the sound principle of co-operative business is to sell at the average market price of the day, and not at the lowest. To aim at selling things cheaper is to get upon the inclined plane of competition, and those upon it commonly slide down into the gutter of commercial smartness, from which co-operation promised to save the public. By selling at the market price the consumer pays no more than he has to pay elsewhere, and he has the advantage of pure articles and just measure, with the additional advantage of knowing that all the profits of honest trading will come into his pockets at the end of each half year in the shape of dividend. Cheap selling reduces the dividend and does not encourage provident and saving habits. The little gain in cheapness, week by week, is a small benefit to the family who still live from hand to mouth, while the saving at the end of the half year, or the end of the year, is a substantial addition to the wealth of the household, and, if left in the store for investment, is the beginning of small fortunes. Under the policy of cheapness the store enters into

competition with the tradesman, and is a continual irritation to him; whereas stores which keep to the average price benefit the shopkeeper, who can obtain better prices for his commodities since no customer can say "he can get things cheaper at the co-operative store." Then the shopkeeper feels he has no competitor in the stores so far as prices are concerned. In this way co-operative stores have made the fortunes of many grocers who never yet made the fortune of any co-operative store.

Some corn mill members were early dissatisfied with the profits made by the mill. Had there been only average market price selling, the profit to the members would have been clear, palpable, and surprising. They had gained in money indirectly, and did not know it. They had gained by the price at which the Society sold flour to them:—

				£	s.	d.
114	weeks at	1d.	per stone less	1,958	18	0
38	,,	2d.	,, ,, ...	1,305	18	8
5	,,	3d.	,, ,, ...	257	15	0
2	,,	4d.	,, ,, ...	137	9	3
				£3,660	0	11

This was the unseen, unknown, uncounted profit they had really gained, which, with the £877 members had already received, made the real profit of the Society £4,537, more than £3,000 of which had been concealed or kept out of sight. Thus was mainly produced the discontent among them. The Society, by sacrificing their own interests to cheap selling, had conferred a benefit upon the town by the reduction they had caused of 2d. a stone in the price of flour. For this the town had no gratitude, and on account of it never furnished to the Society a single friend; at least, it mitigated no hostility—it never awakened any popular interest or respect for this great service rendered to it.

The only defence of cheap selling was that it attracted, at first, members. But the reputation of combined profits of nearly £5,000 coming into the hands of members would have brought them more adherents, and of a better quality than they had, judging from the chronic cries of discontent heard in season and out of season.

But if a larger survey be taken, including the price at which the members would have had to pay, had not the Society reduced the average price in the town, it will be seen how largely members had benefited.

From October, 1847, to July, 1851 (196 weeks), the Society sold flour from *one penny* to *fourpence* per stone *below* the market price. This had the effect of lowering the price through the *whole borough*. When the flour mill began, flour was 2s. 4d. per stone, which the Society sold at 2s. 1d. per stone, being 3d. per stone below the market price. The next week the millers lowered to 2s. 2d. per stone, and the week after—although corn rose 1s. per quarter—the millers kept to the lowered price. The Society had sold during the period named 818,261 stones of flour. Reckoning 2d. per stone saved which the members would have had to pay had not the Society been in existence, the account stands thus—

	£	s.	d.
818,261 stones, at 2d.....	6,818	16	10
Add the sum at which the flour had been undersold	3,660	0	11
Add the profit paid to the members, notwithstanding	877	6	6½
	£11,856	4	3½

A large gain upon a capital of £2,700. Of this enterprise the whole borough reaped the advantage of twopence per stone upon all the consumption since the mill began.

The more important point is that the members of the corn mill had gained more than they knew. More than £11,000 had been put into their pockets.

To men who had been in the inner circle of social inspiration, the advocacy of what was designated "remuncrative prices" was natural and proved effective. The Society departed from the rule of cost price selling, and sold on terms which left a margin for profit, which enabled members to save and the Society to grow.

In the days of the Redemption Society, assiduous efforts were made, meetings held, and addresses given all over Leeds, not without seed being sown of progressive quality. Thus "remunerative" rates of sale were supported by many of this

school. Co-operative ideas were mixed with flour notions without adulterating them. A "self-raising" quality was imparted to the Society, always thought well of in the oven.

With the remunerating prices was adopted the plan of paying 5 per cent upon capital invested, after the manner of Rochdale. The creation of a depreciation fund was a new feature. Then the remainder of the money available was divided among the members according to their purchases, so that, as in stores, the more the money spent in the Society the more the member gained.

A further good effect of the existence of the Leeds Society was that adulteration of flour in the borough had ceased, while prosecutions had to be undertaken and heavy fines had to be inflicted in other towns adjacent.

This year £500 was paid towards the purchase of the new mill, which raised the amount paid to £1,400. The balance sheet of this year was signed by the curious names of David Dunderdale and Josh. Titterington. An address was presented containing some admirable observations, and some otherwise. For instance, it is mentioned that some of the members "grumbled." No doubt they did. But to tell them so officially tended to convert discontent into dislike. Such terms stigmatise questioners and suggesters, and discourage expression of opinion. An objector may be notoriously malevolent and mean mischief, but it is not worth while recognising it. The best rebuke is to state his case and give the answer to it. That creates no irritation and makes no enemy. Mr. Gaunt's address to members had vigorous argumentative remarks. He argued not only with enthusiasm but with true co-operative perspicacity.

For a period the books were closed and no more members taken until the mill and all the property of the Society were valued, so that each member's share could be ascertained. When this was done, it was found that there was a sum of 13s. 4d. accruing to each member. With some contingent fund money the profit amounted to £1 per member, in addition to the weekly benefits they had received as purchasers. It was at once resolved to pay it in kind, and three stones of flour were voted to every member as "bonus."

It is related that an old man came to ask credit for a stone of flour, as his son had got work and he could pay for it out of

his next wages. When he was told that three stones of flour had been voted to him as profit, his face so beamed with gladness that those present thought it a reward for all their labour and perseverance to see it. On being told he could have it when he liked, he said, "I will go and get a bigger bag and be safe of it, for I do not know that our house ever had three stones of flour in it before." The old man did not know what bonus meant, but he understood having three stones of flour without having anything to pay for it.

It was co-operation which first brought such gifts to the working man's door, which he owed not to charity, but to his own good sense in joining one of these societies; and he owes some gratitude to those who generously give time and labour to create for him this facility.

1853.

REMUNERATIVE PRICES PRODUCE PROFIT AND CONTENT—PRINCIPLE AT ANY PRICE—THE FIELD OF CO-OPERATION ENLARGED—MR. GAUNT'S REPARTEES—DIRECTORS RISK MISJUDGMENT—UTOPIANISM COMES TRUE—APPEARANCE OF THE PEOPLE'S MILL—MR. BOVILL'S BILL—STATIONARY MEN AND FORWARD MEN—WILD DEMOCRATS AT LARGE.

NOTICE of the earlier years of a society are longer than some others will be, but the earlier times of a new and adventurous association are the most instructive. Then the conflicts between principle and expediency show the pluck and honesty of those who combat on the side of advancement.

The Society had now begun to act on the wholesome rule of selling at "remunerative" prices, and was cheered by making money and contentment also. Remunerative prices gave profit, and profit represented the savings of members, which, when carried to their credit, gave them new satisfaction as well as a new advantage.

It is to the lasting credit of the directors of this day that their corn buyer gave, with their consent, from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. per quarter above the average price paid by other millers, and no adulteration was attempted or permitted. It shows that a majority of the members were of a superior class who sanctioned this maintenance of principle "at any price," and believed that in the end honesty would pay—and it did.

For the first five years the Society sold to its members only, being precluded by law from selling to others. The persons acquainted with milling know there accrues a surplus produce of value, and in the Leeds case, such as members did not require. This surplus material encumbered the rooms of the mill. At length the law was changed. In the Society's records mention is made of Mr. James Hole and Mr. Lloyd Jones, aided by legal friends in London, to whom the Act giving the power of selling to others was due. These friends were mostly known then as Christian Socialists: Mr. Vansittart Neale, the Rev. Charles (afterwards Canon) Kingsley, Mr. Thomas Hughes (afterwards Judge Hughes), Mr. John Malcolm Ludlow (afterwards Registrar of Friendly Societies), Lord Goderich (afterwards Marquis of Ripon), Mr. Bright, and others. Mr. Slaney was the author of the Friendly Societies Act, which made the extension of co-operative business legal. The new Act of 1852, giving the right to sell to the outside public, opened a wider field for co-operative trade.

The mill's sales were nearly £1,200 a week. More capital was wanted, otherwise they must buy grain every week, whatever the market price might be.

One member said to Mr. Gaunt, "You told us that twenty shillings per share was enough to work the mill."

"Yes," said Mr. Gaunt, "but not to buy it."

Another member said, "Cannot you buy on credit?"

"Yes," Mr. Gaunt answered, "but we cannot buy to advantage. If we buy on credit we must pay credit prices, and then farewell to cheap flour, and farewell to bonuses."

At that date the Society owed £900 for the last award of profit, and a further accumulation of profits in 1853 of 10s. per member, which the directors had retained, and it was with profit money they were working. This year new directors had to be elected. Not half a Board as formerly. In electing a

whole Board it was necessary there should be experienced men upon it; and at the risk of being misunderstood, it was to the credit of the retiring directors that they took the risk of recommending the election of John Ardill, cardmaker, Burley; David Green, stationer, Leeds; William West, tailor, Leeds; John Holmes, draper, Leeds, William Eggleston, merchant, Leeds, * as directors; and R. M. Carter as president, and Samuel Sands as vice-president.

Within this year the business had made a profit of nearly twenty shillings per share, still adhering to the principle of good, sound, unadulterated flour. The members increased, and the Society was again unable to supply its agents with sufficient flour. Applications for agencies came in which could not be accepted. It became necessary to buy another mill. It would never do to be content with 3,000 members in a population of 190,000.

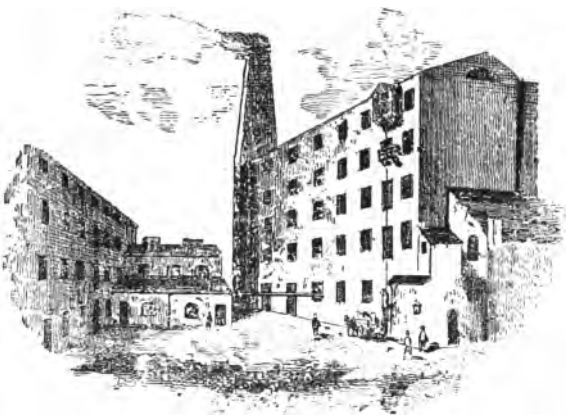
This year Mr. Darnton Lupton, J.P., with John Hope Shaw (the Mayor) and three other gentlemen (one an alderman, and two magistrates), had consented to act as arbitrators. The corn mill had really become an institution. The reports this year bear a notice for the first time, "No person will be admitted to any of the meetings without showing his or her ticket." This was the first official intimation of the eligibility of women to membership, though married women were then, and for many years after, incapable of holding property.

The subscription of a full member was raised from £1 to 30s., to increase working capital. The result of the valuation of the mill and property was an ascertained profit of £1,318, equal to 13s. 4d. per share. This profit had been accumulating during the whole of the Society's existence. During the second half of 1853 the business, despite all difficulties, increased. The total money received for sales during the half year was £25,476, and the clear profit on the half year's transaction exceeded £1,439. Mr. Gaunt said, "When they first talked of selling 1,000 bags of flour per month they were called 'visionaries,' and believed to be so; but the rate of sales had reached 2,000 per month. The mill could not meet the demand. When they talked of making £300 yearly as profit they were called 'Utopians,' a term which was thought to indicate a high

* This is the only instance in which the private business of a group of leaders is given, showing their position in society; useful to know to-day.

degree of wildness; but they had made a net profit of more than £2,670—a profit of nearly 20s. per share. The balance of the purchase money owing for the mill was all paid off. Thus the People's Mill became free and independent, and was regarded as an established fact in Leeds."

This "established fact" was far from having a romantic appearance. The "People's Mill" was as prosaic-looking as mills were made in those days. As the reader will see, who looks at the engraving, there is nothing lively about it but the chimney, which, giving forth smoke, indicates animation within. However, the "People's Mill" was the first mill the people



ever had in Leeds, it has been the forerunner of great things, and will always have interest in the eyes of the social antiquary.

A new trouble arose from the outside. The directors were not behind in improved machinery, and had adopted a method of grinding corn by means of a cold blast of air being admitted to the stones during grinding. Many corn millers throughout the country also adopted the process, as it kept the corn cool while being ground. Mr. Bovill, the patentee of the method, sued the millers for infringement of his patent. A Millers' Association was formed to oppose him, and a large amount of money was spent in law. Mr. Bovill established his claim, and the directors of the Leeds mill agreed to take out a license

to use an "exhaust," as the cold blast was termed. As compensation for already having used his patent they agreed to pay 4d. per quarter for the corn already ground by its use—namely, 92,280 quarters. The total amount paid by instalments was, with interest, £1,557. They further agreed to pay one-sixth of the net profits half-yearly as a royalty, which enabled them to use the patent and all or any of the improvements the patentee might make in it. At this time the balance sheets were sold at one halfpenny each. It was thought too expensive in those days to give them away.

In the early reports of the Society, Co-Operation, with a large O, had Co prefixed to it.

This year the great contest occurred at the addition of two new words to the title of the Society, which hitherto had been "The Leeds District Flour Mill Society." This was changed for "The Leeds Co-operative Flour and Provision Society." This change of name indicated an intention on the part of the progressive members of the Society to venture into a wider field of co-operative trading than merely selling flour. There was little known then of the success of general co-operation. Rochdale's career had not then become an inspiration—the unknown results of a new experiment which inspire the bold and daring, terrify the timorous and unenterprising. A fierce division of opinion arose between the go-forward and the stand-still men. The stationary party who were for a stand-still policy did not stand still in their opposition. They were vociferous at the business meetings. They would not obey the voice of the chairman when he called them to order. Now, the first rule of democratic government is, that authority appointed by common consent, must be finally respected. A member who does not observe this rule shows at once his own want of self-respect, and forfeits all claim to the respect of others, since he neither respects himself nor obeys those appointed to conduct public business. Such persons are unfit for democratic self-government. Their proper destiny and their desert is to be kicked by despots. There was a useful rule to the effect that any member refusing to obey the chair when called upon to do so should be fined 1s. One member had to be fined twice before the motion to add the word "Provision" to the name of the Society was carried. The voting of the Society was by ballot, which ensured an honest result.

Those who wanted to advance were told that if they desired to carry out complete co-operation they had better go outside the Society to do it. They might set up a new society. It was the progressive party who had made the movement. There would have been no flour mill but for them and their insight and enthusiasm for principle. Now, the use of the organisation which they had made was to be denied them, and they were to be driven elsewhere, and do the work all over again. This language was not peculiar to Leeds; we have heard it in London at a much later date.

So turbulent and uproarious were some of the dissentients that it was no uncommon thing to see two or three policemen assisting the doorkeepers and waiting in readiness for any emergency that might occur. This indicates considerable vivacity as well as contentiousness. It was difficult to hold the stand still men.

1854.

VIOLENCE, WANT OF SKILL—CAT'S PAW AGENTS—MR. GAUNT HOLDS THE FLOOR—THE CRIMEAN WAR REACHES TO THE LEEDS MILL—ADVICE TO GO OUTSIDE THE MOVEMENT TAKEN—DRIBBLING.

ALL the persons who behaved so violently were not opposed to progress. Many of them did not understand it. Those who did were the strenuous opponents. There were agents of the Society and others in a small way of business who foresaw, or were told by larger dealers, that storekeeping might interfere with shopkeeping. Dealers astuter than they, encouraged them to pull the chestnuts out of the fire. Co-operative adversaries of most influence are to be found in the rear. Those in front are commonly doing the work of somebody behind. For a time a lull took place in the fight against "provisions," but there was no armistice.

At the next meeting in the Court House, Mr. Sands was in the chair. The principal question discussed was the extension or alteration of the present mill, or the purchasing of another mill, as the managers were unable to keep

production equal to increasing demands. A special committee was appointed to consider this question.

Mr. Gaunt, with the ability characteristic of him, argued the question, which again came up, as to whether the Society should become a "Provision" as well as a "Flour Society." As the reader has seen, the name "The Leeds District Flour Mill Society" was changed to "The Leeds Co-operative Flour and Provision Society." This, as the adversaries rightly surmised, was not intended to be a dead-letter alteration. It was meant to be acted upon if the members could be so persuaded. But the real war had not yet come.

Another kind of war elsewhere produced—as war always does—disturbance beyond its own field of operation.

The Crimean War had caused great fluctuation in the price of flour, which caused anxiety to the directors, and perturbation among the members. But Mr. Emmerson, the manager, had made excellent purchases and had been unremitting in his efforts for the benefit of the Society. A special vote of thanks was given him, which he well deserved.

The profits for the year 1854 were £1,440. The worth of the Society was now £7,900, with a balance in hand of £1,313.

Few things better show the depth and tenacity of the old co-operative inspiration than the following incident. Those told to go outside the Society and form another, if they wished to bring into being what they called "true co-operation," began to act on the instruction. The first meeting to form a new co-operative society for the sale of groceries and provisions was attended by James Hole, David Green, Lloyd Jones, W. West, E. Gaunt, W. Emmerson, E. Gledhill, and H. Wardman. The new Society was to commence as soon as 1,000 members were obtained. Their prospectus said "the profits would not be dribbled away in bonuses." Not a happy phrase, for even "dribbles" of money may temporally fertilise the household, as small showers do the earth. Nevertheless, provident accumulation is better than dribbling. Dribbling brightens the field, but it is thrifty accumulation that makes the crop. The whole profit made in the proposed new Society was to form an accumulated fund for the further development of co-operative principles, and the employment of working men by means of their own capital. This was the plan on which many of the co-operative stores were originally con-

ducted. A good deal of the capital supplied was lent them without interest. The profits were intended to be used as a common fund for the self-employment of members in co-operative workshops, and finally in the collective organisation of an industrial city, self-supported, self-sustained, self-directed, for the benefit of the whole. This is the only scheme of co-operative life in which competition is reduced to a minimum and barter becomes a choice instead of a necessity. This was the idea in Robert Owen's days. All modern co-operation is part of this larger conception. The chief leaders who inspired and organised the flour mill had this idea in their hearts. It was the advocacy of this conception which inspired the Rochdale co-operators. It all appeared in their first profession of aims. The Redemption Society had the same object. The Thousand for Marsala Garibaldi could collect, but the thousand names required before the new Society of Lloyd Jones, David Green, and others could be floated, were never obtained. One thousand were a large number of men to find, animated by an exalted idea, which required sacrifice of the immediate gains for future benefits. The industrial city is an affair of large capital, conducted by men with the genius of Godin. The only form of co-operation possible to average men of small means is by store and workshop, where immediate benefit comes to all or accumulates at their control. Nevertheless, the Lloyd Jones scheme is of historic value. It throws a flood of light on early co-operation and its methods of procedure.

1855.

A TAME YEAR—AN ANTI-ADULTERATION SOCIETY—LLOYD JONES'S FAR-SEEING PROPOSAL.

THIS was a tame year of few incidents, but they were notable enough to make the next year crowded with affairs.

Mr. Lloyd Jones was elected a director, Mr. Speed became president, and was much regarded for the dignity and uprightness with which he maintained the interest of the

Society. A society was formed in the town of Leeds to check adulteration generally, and the Mill directors wisely supported their endeavours. This was the first attempt of joining an outside movement and showing their respect for and interest in the community. The town trade was afflicted with almost universal adulteration. The People's Mill offered a protection in the matter of flour, but as it had no co-operative store it could not help them to purity in anything else. But it showed good feeling in taking part in a movement intended for the benefit of their neighbours. At length the Government took up the question and appointed a committee of inquiry. Mr. Lloyd Jones proposed that the Society should send two representatives to London to give evidence on the Government committee. Mr. Jones saw much further than his colleagues. There might have been a few pounds' expense incurred about it, but £100 of gain might have or would have come by the publicity which would result, besides the proof it would have given to the people of Leeds that the Society's sympathy with honest trade was not barren. The directors had not the wisdom to accede to Mr. Lloyd Jones's proposal, but the Government put an end to their indecision by summoning Mr. Emmerson, the manager of the Leeds mill, and the manager of the Rochdale Corn Mill, which was then attaining an important position. Their manager also testified that flour was adulterated with peas, barley, plaster of Paris, alum, ground bones, and several other injurious ingredients, as we shall see. The beautiful thing was that some millers loudly protested that it was impossible to make good flour when corn was not good without some of these deleterious substances. So when corn was bad their theory was that it must be made worse, and then it was good. By the Government summoning the Leeds manager the Society lost the credit of volunteering to send him. Mr. Lloyd Jones or Lord Goderich could have told how it came about that the Committee of Inquiry sent out a mandate for Mr. Emmerson's appearance. It was the following year when the Committee reported, and the reader will see then how interesting the proceedings were.

The rules, which had been previously amended, were again amended. Indeed, the rules were continually being amended. Every year the Society was outgrowing the limitations of its earlier days.

1856.

DANGERS OF PREMATURE EXPERIMENTS—A STORE RESOLVED UPON—CO-OPERATIVE MAXIMS—COMPLAINTS TAKEN BY THE THROAT—AN INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE—THE ACCUSATIONS DISPROVED—A TRANSFORMATION SCENE—DIRECTORS DISMISSED—THE NEW DIRECTORS FOLLOW THE SAME POLICY FOR WHICH THEIR PREDECESSORS WERE REMOVED—THE FIRST SHOP OPENED IN BRIGGATE—A FIGHTING YEAR—A TRUSTEE COMES TO THE FRONT—JOHN HOLMES TAKES THE FLOOR—THE PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY—MR. EMMERSON'S COGENT EVIDENCE.

THE store idea had slumbered but not slept. The agitation was renewed. Queenswood community commenced too soon, ceased before it should have been born. Any reputed failure of a new idea terrifies two English generations. In progress, a step not well provided for, is a step backwards. The Queenswood cloud hung over Leeds, and distrust checked every proposal of social reformers. Even Lloyd Jones had not recognised the power or place of the new co-operation, destined to such distinguished success; and his scheme of 1,000 members was not for a store society, but for a community. But always for progress, he went with the new movement which Rochdale began and had now proved its vitality.

The question of adding the sales of provisions to the sale of flour had gained strength during repeated discussions. At the end of fierce debates an average spectator would think that both sides were of the same opinion still. But as all discussions show, the auditors are not of the same opinion next day. The knowledge of new facts dissipates prejudice and informs the judgment. The profits being made by the Rochdale Provision Society were now becoming considerable, and were attracting outside attention. When a meeting was called in April to consider the question, Mr. Lloyd Jones delivered a powerful and telling speech, and it was resolved unanimously that the directors be empowered to extend the business of the Society to the sale of groceries and provisions. A committee was appointed, of whom Lloyd Jones and James

Hole were members, to carry out the object of the resolution. This was the second deliberate step onward, taken by the forward movement.

This year was made lively by complaints of the quality of flour and the general management of the mill, in which the complainers were quite wrong, and were therefore more confident than men usually are when they are in the right.

There are peculiarities of experience in the Leeds Society different from other stores, and which other societies will find instructive. One distinction lay in the excellent reports made by it. Another feature is the occurrence of maxims which all societies need, which many never hear, and which many who do hear them forget, namely, that a co-operative society is an honest association, whose members have no interest in cheating each other. A great deal of very hard work is done for nothing, and those whose interests are thus promoted gratuitously should not be quick to make aspersive charges, and should be sure of their facts when they do complain. New members cannot be expected to know these facts; they will be the better when they do.

The directors took the complaints by the throat and shook the errors out of them. They appointed an Investigation Committee,* made on a motion by Mr. Jones and Mr. Pease. The "People's Flour Mill" had now become a public institution.

The investigation was not delayed, and did its work with singular thoroughness. It inquired into everything—rumour, suspicion, or complaint; it was also a report of great ability of statement, and produced a good effect. One charge against Mr. Emmerson, the mill manager, was that he went to the mill on Sunday morning to get his books ready for the directors on Monday. He had so much to do that he had, against his will, to sacrifice part of his Sunday to keep his accounts well in hand. This was really a complaint against an important servant for doing too much and being too zealous in the service of his accusers. The duty of the complainants was to move that an assistant be appointed to relieve him of his overwork; to profit by his industry, and complain of him for it, was meanness as well as narrowness.

* The members were Messrs. Jones (chairman), Sands, Bailey, Shaw, Speed, Watson, Johnson, and Samuel Gaunt, whose name "Samuel" was given probably to distinguish him from another Gaunt in the Society.

The management of the mill was proved to have been excellently conducted—economically, efficiently, and profitably. Vivid charges were found to be based on rumour, and those who made the charges had no proof to offer.

By a certain peremptoriness, or abruptness of manner, it was admitted that Mr. Emmerson had given offence to members. This obliterated in their eyes the sense of the real zeal, business knowledge, and devotion by which the manager had served the Society. Fault of manner is an unfortunate fault, but it is a lesser evil than the loss of the services of an able servant, and at that time Mr. Emmerson's services could not be replaced. It was better to put up with irritation than risk the prosperity of the mill, by which all profited.

Then a transformation scene arose which the Society has not seen since. The directors were requested to dismiss the manager—tried, true, and capable—by a resolution so instructing them. They refused to deprive the Society of a servant whose worth they knew. William Campbell made a motion to dismiss them and their secretary, Mr. Gaunt seconding the motion, which showed that there was believed to be real necessity for the motion. A society may be destroyed by dissatisfaction, however good its management. Since then we have seen Governments destroyed through the contemptuousness of one or two Ministers. There are always people who think more of discourtesy to, or neglect of themselves than of the interests of the State or a society.

Nevertheless, when directors refuse to carry out instructions lawfully given, their duty is to resign. The motion made ended with the dismissal of eleven directors only, Lloyd Jones being one of them. Mr. Samuel Haigh was elected vice-president, and afterwards president, and served the Society well for many years, and also as the grocery manager and buyer. Among the new directors elected was Mr. Bell, afterwards president. He had long been a hard worker for the Society. Whether on the board of directors or not, he was always to the front when there was any work on hand, in speaking at the meetings or elsewhere. The curious thing was, when the new directors got into harness, they found that the affairs of the Society had been much better managed than they supposed, and did not remove the officer they were elected to dismiss. Mr. Emmerson remained in the service of the Society long after, and ultimately

resigned of his own free will, which proved that the directors so summarily dismissed were right in their judgment. They were as good servants as the Society ever had.

A review was made this year of the nine years' position of the Society, when it was found that a profit during that time had been made of £9,456. The statement was signed by W. Emmerson, clerk.

Discussion *had* produced conviction. A new thing was now seen. A grocery committee was in operation, and was granted £700 for the purchase of their first stock. It was thought a commanding front shop was necessary for business, and one was taken in Briggate at a rental of £100 and all rates. Though the members voted unanimously for the opening of the shop, it did not meet with the support which was expected. The flour agents proved impediments which were not calculated upon, and the Leeds public saw the first co-operative shop opened in their midst as a novelty which did not excite their enthusiasm.

This was a fighting year. A "trustee" came out with a remarkable address prophetic of the future of the Society, and even of the old-age pension so much talked of now. It said: "Accumulate capital (without which we shall always be powerless); provide all other food, as well as flour; grow our own corn, as well as grind it; extend and build our own houses, and soon the clear income of the Society will be sufficient to pension off all old and incapable members with 10s. a week and a house rent free."

When Charles I. lingered longer than suited the convenience of his courtiers he "begged their pardon for being such an unconscionable time in dying." But it is not my fault that this year's affairs are on such an unconscionable length or, like King Charles, I would apologise for it. It is all owing to the interest of the events.

The Parliamentary Committee on Adulteration issued their report this year. We must look at it, it concerns this history.

The *Chairman,* my townsman and friend, William Scholefield, said to the Leeds mill manager, "I suppose the Leeds Society thought they could make flour cheaper than the millers?"

Mr. Emmerson: Yes, and we have done it. We have sold at 2d. per stone less than the millers.

Mr. Scholefield: What do you do with your seconds?

Mr. Emmerson: We do not make any seconds. Seconds are made by a different process. We have only one process. There are many ways of adulterating flour without being subjected to penalty. The Society adopted none, as they had no interest in cheating themselves. Egyptian wheat is about 20s. per quarter less than the corn bought by the Society. Yet it is very deceptive. It looks beautiful to the eye, but it has not much nutrition in it. Millers use it largely to adulterate flour with, and purchasers, who knew nothing of quality, did not like the pure flour of the Society, which was not so white. Just as the Egyptian wheat is used to adulterate flour, so sharps are used to lessen the price of oatmeal. It cannot be detected by the eye. You cannot discover but what it is oatmeal.

Mr. Villiers asked what check the Society had against adulteration in its own mill?

Mr. Emmerson: The directors are appointed to see there is no mixture.

Mr. Villiers said the Society sets up as being superior to its neighbour. What security have you that you are better than other people?

Mr. Emmerson: The directors are the security. They have no interest in adulteration. Mr. Emmerson added: Mr. Dresser, a chemist in Leeds, has written to the *Leeds Mercury* saying that bread he had purchased from five principal bakers was found to contain 5lbs. of alum to 20 stones of flour, and, in the purest instance, 2lbs. of alum to 20 stones of flour. Barley is about 40s. a quarter, and wheat 70s. One quarter of barley to three quarters of wheat would make good average flour, and perhaps would lessen the price 3d. or 4d. per stone.

Mr. Emmerson further said: I made a mixture to bring before our general meeting of one-quarter barley to show what could be done. It was acknowledged by the members at the meeting—who did not know what it was made of—to be very good bread. They said they did not wish to have any better. The cost of that was 4¾d. per stone less, but it would not be pure flour, nor have the quality of pure flour. It would have been a fraud upon the members in the name of cheapness. The members could not find out that anything was wrong with the bread, but it would not be as nutritious as it ought to be,

nor would it be pure as we profess to give it. Had the Society intended to enter into competition with the millers, it could have undersold them and made a large profit.

Mr. Peacock and *Mr. Moffat*, members of the Committee, wanted to know whether the Society took any trouble to find out whether adulteration on the part of their neighbours took place, and to prosecute them.

Mr. Emmerson: The Society set up to conduct an honest business themselves, and not to act as public prosecutors for the town.

It was asked why workmen, who were injured by adulteration, did not prosecute them.

Mr. Emmerson: There was a difficulty in workmen becoming prosecutors. It would be awkward for them, since they were mostly everywhere in debt with shopkeepers. Besides, how could they give the time to attend three or four days at magistrates' courts, to take out a summons, get up evidence, and conduct the prosecution? A few very independent workmen might do it, but they must make considerable sacrifice for the good of others.

[This even gentlemen did not do on behalf of their poorer neighbours, whom they knew were daily consuming deleterious food.]

Mr. Emmerson incidentally explained to the Committee the domestic habits of Leeds in that day.

Yorkshire people bought their flour, made their own bread, and had their own ovens. The Society had then 3,000 members. They had bankers, merchants, and magistrates connected with the Society, but principally working men. The Society's flour is what we designate "made from pure wheat." The oatmeal is made from pure shellings of oats.

Being asked the question, "Do you never put potato starch into your flour?"—

Mr. Emmerson: We never put anything of any description into it, it is all pure, genuine flour, and has been from the beginning.

Viscount Goderich asked: "Is not inferior flour sold at lower prices?"

Mr. Emmerson: Yes, but we make but one kind and of the best wheat. Mr. John Blakey, at Keighley, Rushworth Brothers, of Ingrove, near Keighley, Mr. East, of Nottingham,

and other adulterating millers, were named as having been fined, and some did hard labour who did not pay the fines.

Viscount Goderich, whom we know as the Marquis of Ripon, was on the Committee, so was Mr. Villiers, the present father of the House of Commons. William Scholefield, the chairman of the Committee, was the author of the Act which established limited liability in business, and enabled co-operative employers to share profits with their servants without becoming responsible for their debts, or the servants being liable for their masters' debts. When I was a publisher in the city of London, I shared profits with those I employed, which made them my partners in-law. They could carry away my books or property and did it—I had no redress.* Mr. Scholefield's Act altered all this, and made co-operative participation of profit in business, legal.

The millers had their friends on the Committee who were sharp on Mr. Emmerson, and endeavoured to corner and confuse him; but he had his wits about, and very good wits too. His evidence was given with directness, clearness, and force.

Mr. Farrand, of the Rochdale Corn Mill, was also examined. He said "they found persons judge wheat by the colour. They preferred white, which was injurious, to darker flour entirely wholesome. The eye seemed harder to please than the stomach." But as the purchasers became instructed that whiteness was produced by alum and other mixtures, their preference for it began to decline.

Alum, a medical witness explained, has a bad effect upon the teeth, the gums, and the mucous membranes of children. It creates irritability in the bowels, producing constipation and at times the contrary. It was given in evidence that chicory is adulterated with Venetian red and treacle to give it a brighter colour. It also increases the weight. In one manufacturing department 700 tons of carrots and 350 tons of parsnips were used for adulterating purposes.

* The Leeds Society was in the same condition as Mr. Emmerson owned to the Committee. Had members or enemies had wit or malice sufficient, they might have destroyed the business any day. A secretary of a Manchester Friendly Society, named Radcliffe, took £4,000 of members' money. The magistrate dismissed the charge of robbery on the ground that he was a member, and a member was a partner.

Here were arguments in plenty in favour of providing members with other articles than flour, sold in a pure state. Had all the dramatic facts and picturesque incidents of this inquiry been selected and circulated in Leeds, it would have been worth £500 to the Society. It was worth that as an advertisement and vindication of the Society in the eyes of tradesmen, adversaries, and members. Readers, high and low, would have read it with amusement, wonder, and instruction. Parliamentary authority was worth a thousand testimonies of partisans, however honest.

Mr. Lloyd Jones's wise motion was rejected by persons who had no *outside* mind. Mr. Jones had, and knew that the progress of co-operation depended upon the view which the public took, and the impression its proceedings made upon them. It will be seen that working men and their families were being poisoned three times a day by dangerous flour, and were charged more for it than good flour ought to cost, and that by good judgment and combination they had freed themselves from these dangers. Every man becoming sensible of these risks would have been disposed to join the sole rescuing society.

1857.

FROGS ABOUT—ORGANISATION OF THE AGENTS—A PENITENT AGENT—CONSPIRACY OF AGENTS—THE BRIGGATE STORE LANGUISHES—VICTORY OF IGNORANCE—THE BRIGGATE STORE DIES—A GREAT TEMPTATION—ANOTHER VINDICATORY AUDIT.

THE failure of the Briggate shop, which occurred this year, gave comfort to prophets of disaster. Store keeping had won no success, which alone could silence the guttural cries of those born with frogs in their minds.

The change of title which presaged the sale of provisions still caused perturbation. Then uprose all the inexperienced, timid, foreboding, suspicious, and imputative members. "The new speculation," they said, "would ruin the prosperous society. The directors would never make the new trade

pay. The competition was too keen and too great—besides, they had no knowledge of the new business;" all of which was said against starting the mill. Furthermore, the advocates of the change were accused of "being anxious to make places for themselves." The voices of the croakers were loud in the land. When the march of progress was commenced, the frogs of obstruction leaped about in shoals and did all they could to embarrass the advance, and went very nigh to fulfilling their own predictions.

For the information of the chance reader, it is necessary to recount the constitution and career of the agents who now begin to figure as insurgents.

There was good judgment of business device, in which the Leeds Society has excelled, in the early organisation of the "Flour Agents," the term by which they became technically known. The agent was prohibited from selling any other flour than that of the Society, and at a price fixed by the committee and communicated to him from time to time; so that a purchaser always knew whose flour he was buying, and that the price was not determined by the caprice or the cupidity of the agent, but was the authorised price appointed by the responsible managers of the Society. The agent was paid 1s. 6d. per bag of twenty stones (280 lbs.), a reasonable amount being allowed for leakage. The agent was required to pay into the bank a sum sufficient to cover his order, and produce the banker's receipt. Thus loss was avoided. The agencies were eagerly sought for, though not lucrative; but what gain there was, was without risk, unless the agent gave credit, when it was upon his sole responsibility. Many agents sold from twenty to thirty bags of flour per week, and thus made a fair living; some of them also were, as we have said, small shopkeepers, and sold other goods on their own account. If the price of flour rose, the agent paid the excess upon his stock; if the price fell, he received a rebate upon his stock, but, in a few cases only, an agent would continue selling flour at the higher price. In one instance an agent, who had been allowed £3. 13s. 4d. rebate on twenty bags, continued to sell at the old price the stock of flour on which he received the rebate; but he had, when detected, to refund the amount and lose his agency. The man was not dishonest at heart and always regretted the error into which he had fallen, and it

remained as a serious sin upon his conscience, and on his death-bed he expressed his sorrow for it to Mr. Campbell.

The agency system, above described, remained without change until the Society established stores of its own. The new Briggate store was not at all to the agent's mind. It did not make the progress its well-wishers expected; assailants shot at it from concealed trenches; but the directors were clear in their decision that it must be sustained. They had become convinced that if towns of much inferior extent to Leeds could make a grocery department succeed, Leeds could do it; and they voted £500 more to strengthen the Briggate store, but without success, as the reader has seen. The flour agents were most of them, as we have said, little grocers also, and they naturally resented the creation of the Briggate grocer's shop, at which all members were expected to deal. Their customers for flour, more or less, dealt with them for groceries. Many of the members had what were called "shots," or credit scores, with the flour agents, and could not leave them if they would; and the agent-creditors did not facilitate their release, but bestirred themselves to dissuade members from dealing at the Briggate store. Then they demanded of the Society a commission of 7½ per cent, which was given them. Afterwards, a demand of 10 per cent was made. They represented that they had obtained 10 per cent from grocers for selling their goods. They could not warrant the grocers' goods, but they could the flour mill's goods, which meant a preferential increase of custom to them. But of this advantage they were silent. They were accorded the 10 per cent—nevertheless the Briggate store languished.

The Briggate store got worse and worse. A traveller was appointed to wait upon members and families of greater income than working men, to induce them to deal at the Briggate depôt, with a view to establish family trade. But this did not mend matters, nor did it shake the settled co-operative purpose of the directors, who had steered the flour ship through stormy waters. They stood stoutly at the helm of the new craft, which they believed they could steer into smooth seas.

Slowly the directors came to understand there was a rebellion among the agents. They had reared an enemy for themselves. They had created a vested interest, which now turned against them.

In their report for this year (1857) the directors say: "One great disadvantage of this Society has been the want of information among the members—not only on the management of its own affairs, but on the important power of co-operation in general." The same trouble would have befallen the Rochdale Society, had they not begun with an education rate.

The directors were beaten by ignorance, yet the opposition of interest would have been ineffectual had the members been enlightened. After languishing, the Briggate shop showed signs of pectoral consumption. All unsupported stores die of "disease of the chest." The bright shop had to be given up.

When it was closed there was a fine opportunity for the croaking prophets of disaster to predict the impossibility of co-operation ever succeeding.

Here was an alluring shop in the best business part of the town, with ample funds and plentiful provisions, which could not keep its doors open. Who could have foreseen then that co-operation would be one day the most splendid success not only in Leeds, but in the land?

Difficulties of another kind beset the directors. The white flour trouble returned. Some members craved white flour; having been reared on alum bread without knowing it to be injurious, they wanted the Society to give them white flour. There was, as the reader knows, an inferior sort of wheat which gave very white flour, but it was deficient in gluten and innutritious. It was a great temptation to a society seeking custom, to gratify this unwise demand. Many directors in other societies have, in such cases, decided for cheapness against principle, saying honesty did not pay. But the Leeds directors had the courage to refuse to supply dishonest flour, whether they lost custom or not. In the end the Society was a great gainer, for people had confidence in it, and then it was found honesty did pay. It is impossible to estimate too highly this honourable courage, which risked loss of members for the sake of maintaining principle.

Studious of financial confidence, the directors had the books and the accounts of the Society again examined by another of the best accountants in Leeds, Mr. E. Bolton, who certified that the books had been well kept, and that the Society was making steady progress in trade, capital, number of members, and profit.

1858.

AN AMAZING ANNOUNCEMENT—PLATO'S REPUBLIC TERRIFIES THE WISE MEN OF LEEDS—SIR EDWARD BAINES ON THE PARALLELOGRAM—POLITICAL ECONOMY OPPOSED TO CO-OPERATION—ROCHDALE VISITED—THE AGENTS SUPERSEDED—A NEW "FANGLE" PAYS BETTER THAN THE OLD FANGLE—MR. PRENTIS'S SERVICES.

AN amazing, not to say incredible, announcement was made this year. At a public meeting, the chairman (Samuel Haigh) said that some persons objected—

1. That the Co-operative Society set up labour against capital.

2. That it consisted of persons of certain sects in religion.

3. That they had an idea of setting up a Plato's republic or an Owen's parallelogram.

Is it possible that in those days there were persons in Leeds, not in a lunatic asylum, who thought co-operators—whose object from the beginning was to acquire capital—were against capital?

They must be asylum men who objected to the Society because it contained persons of different sects in religion. This is an objection to Parliament, to an insurance society, or a railway company.

The Society never proposed to set up a parallelogram in Leeds. It would much have improved the town if it could have been done. The incredible thing is the Plato idea. The wildest dreamer who had visited Leeds never thought of it. Probably not 100 persons in Leeds had ever read Plato's work, and not ten who understood it. However, it is hard to say how mad persons, counted intelligent, were in those days.

No one appeared to know that in 1819 the Guardians of the Poor in Leeds sent Mr. Edward Baines, one of a deputation, to New Lanark to visit Mr. Owen, the inventor of the parallelogram, and that Mr. Baines reported that "Mr. Owen's plans were superior to any the deputation ever witnessed, and dispensing more happiness than perhaps any other institution in the kingdom." So it was not the co-operators of 1858, but

the Guardians of the Poor of 1819, who first brought praise of the parallelogram to Leeds.

The Rev. Dr. Hook, who was, deservedly, received with great enthusiasm, related, among other things, a similar instance of cultivated insanity to be found in the educated circles in which the Rev. Doctor moved. He said that when he mentioned the Leeds Society it was remarked, "Oh, it is the Co-operative Association; a Co-operative Association is contrary to the principles of political economy." This objection, which it is denied now that it ever existed, was in full blast then.

Dr. F. R. Lees, the Rev. M. Philips, Mr. R. M. Carter, Mr. David Green, and Mr. Campbell spoke at this meeting effectively, and Dr. Baker, Factory Inspector, at great length.

Trouble with the flour agents still continued, and a resolution was passed requiring all agents, who would not sell the Society's groceries, to give up the flour agency, as others would be appointed in the neighbourhood who would do it. The agents who had been created by the Society, and nurtured by it, became open enemies within its own borders. Those members who had been opposed from the first to the provision business, joined with the agents in harassing the directors. Several of these adversaries were so demonstrative and defiant of the chairman that they had to be fined. One member was twice fined one shilling at the same meeting.

More and more began to be felt the want of information on the part of the members, on the nature of co-operation, which put power into the hands of the working class for the improvement of their own fortunes. This led the directors to institute meetings for the delivery of addresses and the education of their members and the public. Though the store in Briggate lost £176 in its first half year, the flour department made a profit of £1,982. The Briggate store lost every half year until it was ended. Therefore, it was resolved to send a deputation to Rochdale to make inquiries how they managed their business. The inquirers came home and strongly recommended the adoption of the Rochdale plan, which was that of selling by their own agents for ready money payment. The flour agency which worked well for the mill had now proved a most unfortunate bar to the extension of the grocery business. To overcome this obstacle it was unanimously resolved to adopt

the Rochdale plan of retailing flour, groceries, and provisions by the employés of the Society, and the first half-yearly result was a profit of £44, which continued to increase ever after. The plan involved the financial education of members in cash payments. The habit of credit was strong upon them, and formed a second nature, which subjected working men to perpetual impecuniosity and humiliating dependence upon others. Selling its flour, groceries, and provisions by its own servants was called a "new-fangled plan" of the Society. But it paid, and profit caused it to grow in favour year by year. The spirit of confidence and enterprise was unabated, and the Society bought 2,272 square yards of land adjoining their own premises for the sum of £681 for future extension. This year Mr. James Prentis was appointed secretary, and for sixteen years he was found to be an entirely honest and upright servant. When age incapacitated him for his onerous duties the directors found him less fatiguing employment.

1859.

THE OVENS OF DISCONTENT—REVOLUTIONS OF PROGRESS—THE WORKER HIS OWN HELPER—MEMBERS FOR THE FIRST TIME SUGGEST A NEW DEPARTMENT—TRUSTEES COUNSEL PARTICIPATION IN PROFIT—CHEAPNESS MEANS LOW DIVIDENDS.

THE voice of discontent, if it did not cease, grew lower than formerly. The bulk of the wiser members had found out that, as a rule, the fault-finder was the least suggestive as to what could better be done. Acrimony is not wisdom. A quick-tempered, explosive critic is as the French wit said of La Harpe, "He is like an oven—always hot, but never bakes anything." Policemen were not wanted at the meetings this year. Disturbers had become discredited.

During the twelve years of the Society's existence its progress had involved many changes. The provision trade had been added to the flour trade; successive kinds of business had been entered upon which, being new, were met with

distrust. The agents had been superseded. To the sale of flour had been joined the sale of other commodities under officers appointed by the Society, who were entirely responsible to it, and were the administrators of its business. These were so many revolutions in early customs of the store which, like political revolutions in a State, created contest and violent divisions of opinion.

This year the directors, as in some previous years, did not think it good policy to pay out all the amount gained, but added £271 of the profits to the share capital in proportion to the amount each shareholder had in the books of the Society.

The grocery profit for the half year ending in June had risen to £150, promising £300 for the whole year.

This winter the directors got up a series of lectures. Mr. Bell, who was then president, gave the first in St. Peter's Street Stone Chapel. His subject was thought characteristic of him, viz, "Labour, Wages, and Profit—or, the Worker his own Helper." Other lectures were delivered in different districts. All were well attended, and new members were added to the Society.

Hitherto the directors had all the labour and responsibility of initiation. This year, for the first time, the members shared it, and requested the directors to take another onward step. They had found onward steps profitable. They had not only overcome their apprehensions to them, but were beginning to prefer them. Their request was that a clothing business should be commenced. It was commenced, but difficulties attended it for a long time. First they had the perils of inexperienced managers, and also of managers who wanted to manage, not only the business, but the directors. As this was decisively resisted, one of them brought an action against the Society, in which he had to be content with considerable reduction of his claim. The directors had asserted their just authority, and not only dismissed the manager, but made a clean sweep of all the tailors as well.

The advantages of distributing their own groceries, through their own stores and their own servants, continued to be shown through successive years. The "new system," as it was called, during the two half years since its adoption, showed a total profit of £919, which allowed an award of 2s. in the £ to purchasers.

In 1859 the trustees of the Society made a report "By Order," but no names are attached, showing who the trustees were. Their report, however, showed great vigilance on their part. They had looked into the workings of the whole Society, into both flour and provision departments. They ascertained that all persons in positions of trust were guaranteed in a satisfactory way. Up to that date each member was expected to hold a £5 share of the capital. The average amount actually held was not more than £3. 4s. They recommended the members to take up their full £5 shares. They further recommended that the servants of the Society be given a stimulus to exertion in the shape of a reward, conditional upon the increased exertions and improved results in profit and economy. They thought the servants should be bound by interest to promote the progress of the Society. Mr. Nussey was president, Mr. Haigh vice-president, and Mr. Prentis secretary, when this recommendation was made. It recognises the right of profit on the part of those whose industry and forethought made it.

"Remunerative" prices were found to be beneficial all round. Many members never understand that low prices mean low profits, and those who insist upon low profits do not intend to save, yet they expect high dividends. The two things cannot go together.

1860.

THE PAMPHLET OF AN ENTHUSIAST—A RIVAL CORN MILL—THE TRUSTEES' REPORT—THE WAREHOUSE OVER THE STABLES—STOREKEEPERS' SHARE IN PROFITS—CO-OPERATORS AGAINST RETREATING BEFORE SURMOUNTABLE OBSTACLES—A SERVANT CAUSES A DIVISION—LETTERS TO THE "EXPRESS."

A PAMPHLET of the clarion kind, but bearing no author's name, appeared. Its title, singular in its terms, was as follows:—"A few plain words of advice respecting the future conduct of the members of the Leeds

District Flour and Provision Society towards each other, as well as several Hints and Suggestions, which may be of some service to the reader, if he should think proper to make use of them; but none at all if he does not. By ONE OF THEMSELVES. (Leeds: Printed by David Green, Boar Lane.)"

This pamphlet, surmised at the time to be from the pen of Mr. John Holmes, was written with the clearness, point, and directness which were characteristic of him. It was a little reproachful in places, but racy of the Leeds soil, with the familiar force of Cobbett. All the experience then in the minds of members, and all the difficulties of the Society, were touched upon in a manner only possible to a man who knew everything upon the subject. One passage showed that the views of the writer were larger than mill or store. It showed that he fully believed the majority of members had the idea, not only of raising themselves, but of raising the class to which they belonged. "There is no end," he said, "to the success within the reach of the working men of this town if they are but determined to exercise their full power. Don't talk about mismanagement—that is a thing which can and will be got over in the end. Go on purchasing at your own store. Go on saving. What if the Society does lose a few thousands by mismanagement? The prize for which you are toiling is *social emancipation*—good homes, and your own, too, remember; good clothing for yourself and family; good food and plenty, without fear of poverty; work of your own, on your own land, or in your own workshops or factories; your own perfect machinery, too, helping you; and, above all, your children educated in a way that shall make them, though workers, the first men and women in the land, both for usefulness and intellectual attainments; which shall give to your wives and daughters intellectual and moral culture joined with graces unsurpassed by any in the land." Here was an enthusiast of the first water. Few societies have had his equal.

During this year there were several new stores opened, all promising good results. The Society had clearly learnt the art of going forward.

About this time some dissentients set up a rival corn mill, which, however, did not last long, and brought no mischief—except to its needless promoters.

The trustees, who took an active interest in the affairs they

represented, gave another report of the position of the Society, which showed as follows:—

	CAPITAL.			TURNOVER.			PROFIT.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Flour	5,807	1	0	49,208	13	6	2,693	3	8
Groceries	6,655	19	0	19,168	13	0	613	12	3
Boots and Clothing...	2,192	17	2	1,865	5	6½	36	8	0
	£14,655	17	2	£70,242	12	0½	£3,343	3	11

The boot sales are here given with clothing sales. The manufacture of boots was not yet begun, whose success is associated with a name of mark in the Society—Mr. William Swallow, sen., who was a member of the first board of directors in 1847, and in 1856 was one of the eleven directors who had the honour to be dismissed for an act of signal usefulness. His inquiring heartiness of expression is typical of the enthusiasm demanded in pioneer days. Beyond his own advocacy, he gave to the service of the Society two sons. One Mr. J. Swallow, the manager of the boot department, and another Mr. W. Swallow, formerly the Secretary of the Society.

The advantages of the Society distributing its own goods through its own employés and stores were shown in the past year, the most profitable year since they commenced their provision business. This year a Building Committee was appointed, and Mr. W. Bell brought before the directors the subject of building new stores on the Society's land at Holbeck. Their warehouse had hitherto been over the stables, a very unsuitable place for storing articles whose excellence consisted in their aroma and intrinsic purity of flavour. Such a depôt could do no credit to the taste, and was beneath the dignity which the Society had now obtained. The directors unanimously agreed to new buildings being erected. Interest was taken in principle as well as in progress, and a committee was appointed to consider the question of "bonus" to labour. This committee recommended, and the directors adopted, the allotment of sixpence to all agents and storekeepers for every member they entered, and 5 per cent bonus to the storekeepers, over and above their wages, on the gross profits made at each

store. The Society had now adopted the familiar language of co-operation. It had ceased to talk of "flour agents," and addressed them as "storekeepers." The old agencies had really become co-operative stores.



WILLIAM SWALLOW.

(*See page 70.*)

The clothing department was in so precarious a condition that the fainter hearts proposed to give it up, but the stouter minded co-operators maintained that it was not co-operative

to give up a business which ought to succeed. Co-operators never retreat in the face of difficulties which experience and courage can overcome. It was against their pride as co-operative innovators to show to the public that working men were unable to manage a business for themselves. The difficulty was purely local. The year's profit in the flour department was £2,693. The grocery profit was also good, being £613.

A trouble common to all immature societies arose again. Whenever a leading servant was dismissed two parties were formed—one for opposing the dismissal, to which the dismissed person is always an inciter; and another party who rightly sustain the directors, who being responsible for the management ought to be treated with consideration even when they err. Major Cartwright said, "Juries were so excellent an institution that even their errors should be respected." In one case, where the Leeds directors dismissed the head miller, the vice-president and some members took the part of the miller. This is to place the interest of a servant over the interest of a society, and to risk breaking up the society in the contention. Beyond unimputated representation, made to the directors on behalf of the person believed to be wronged, no members wishing well to the society ought to proceed without very exceptional reason. If the strongest representation that can be made on behalf of the dismissed member fails to secure his replacement, some restitution should be made by his party to the servant believed to be injured, but the existence of the society should never be imperilled, nor should members withdraw from it. Whenever a servant is a party to these divisions, he is always encouraged by enemies outside to break up the society by dissension. In the case of the head miller in question letters were sent to the *Leeds Express*, and fly-sheet reprints circulated aiding discontent. Prolonged meetings were held in the Old Court House about it. Meetings were adjourned at 11-45 p.m., to the great joy of trading adversaries of co-operation. Mr. W. Bell, the president, eventually steered the ship of the Society through the turbulent partisan billows.

1861.

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST IN CO-OPERATION—THE MEAT SELLING DIFFICULTY—IN SEARCH OF PROSPERITY IN VACANT PLACES AND STREET CORNERS—GARIBALDI FUNDS RECOVERED.

EVOLUTION teaches the doctrine of the "survival of the fittest." But the fittest would not survive if they did not fight for existence. The directors of the period made the fight, or no record would be needed to-day.

Undeterred by difficulties in creating new branches of business, a meat department was commenced, although it is the most difficult co-operators undertake. For reasons that need not be dwelt upon here, the project has failed in the hands of many stores. Nevertheless the Leeds directors carried it on for a period with profit, and for more periods with loss. Eventually it had to be closed altogether, although the Society had built what was regarded as a superior slaughter-house, had a good shop and other first-rate appliances. One thing they lacked—they had been unable to find a manager who could make it pay all round, a difficulty which has led many stores to regard the meat business as impracticable. The reader will find that on this account other reverses befell the Society in later attempts, but Leeds commonly made everything it undertook succeed eventually. The establishment of stores on the Society's own account seemed likely to prove the turning point in its successful career.

Prosperity does not come of itself—it has to be fetched. The leaders of the growing movement went out to look for it, and bring it in—and not without doing it. Meetings were held at street corners and in vacant places in the town. A stool and a table were rostrum and platform. In addition to stores in the borough, five had been opened outside, as at Clifford, 13 miles distant; Otley, 10 miles; Pudsey, Idle, and Saltaire, 7 to 9 miles distant.

This year Mr. John Holmes laid the foundation stone of the People's Hall, Mr. Bell stating that the cost of the hall, stores, and fixtures would be £2,229, exclusive of the land.

These were Garibaldi times, and Leeds showed great friendship for "The General," as he was popularly called. Many co-operators joined in a Leeds subscription for his use. The amount exceeded £400. The treasurer, for reasons of his own, retained the money notwithstanding that Garibaldi had written to him requesting him to transmit the money as he directed. As Acting Secretary to Garibaldi's London Committee, the writer came to Leeds and made representations which ended in the Leeds subscription being forwarded as is elsewhere related.* It was co-operative opinion which was mainly influential in causing the transmission of the Leeds gift to Garibaldi.

1862.

THE "FANGLE" TERROR OVER—A TEALESS TEA—A WOMEN'S GUILD WANTED—THE HOSPITALITY OF CO-OPERATION—DRAPERY DROOPS—GENEROUS SYMPATHY WITH THE AMERICAN CAUSE.

"FANGLE" is a word of peculiar effect on English ears—perhaps on British ears, if the Scotch were consulted. It expresses or embodies the high water-mark of contempt for anything not wanted, not liked, and not understood. Hence the store system, when added to the organisation of the mill, was called a "new-fangled system." Many an excellent device has never been tried, and others extinguished when tried by the "fangle" terror. But "fangle" did not kill the "new system." It was the rebellious flour agents who were killed. By this time (1862) they are no longer an impedimentary force, and the Society is not only undisturbed but aspiring. It has emerged into public repute, and invites persons eminent and official in the town, to take part in its proceedings, which increased its

* Visit to a Strange Treasurer of Garibaldi. "Sixty Years of an Agitator's Life." Chap. LXXVI.

publicity and attracted attention to the work it was doing. At the annual tea meeting, in the People's Hall, tables were set for about 500 persons. The platform had a table for the mayor, aldermen, and other eminences invited. The platform table abounded with refreshments. A beautiful silver urn was placed at the head, and Mr. Hunt had the place of honour (as the president should) among the distinguished guests of the Society. When all was ready the alderman who sat before the silver tea urn began to fill the cups, which he observed to have neither fragrance nor colour.

"Hunt," said the alderman, "what is the matter with the Co-operative Society? What have we got here?"

"Tea," said the president confidently.

"It seems to me," said the alderman, "to be mere water."

True, it was water. First-class water, no doubt, but it certainly was not tea. The president found to his confusion that the tea makers had forgotten to put the tea into the urn. Mr. Hunt suddenly left the chair vacant, and rushed away to call the tea makers to their senses, and some favourite blend of Souchong and Assam soon distilled its amber stream into the aldermen's cups. Mr. Hunt declared he would never preside again at a public tea unless they had women to make it. There was no Women's Guild in those days; the men were caterers at festive parties, and men do not know how to make tea. There was plenty of good tea in the canisters, but no one thought of putting it into the pot. The repasts of tea, or dinner, given by co-operators are always plentiful and excellent. I have been in many agitations, but the co-operative movement is the only one which gave its friends anything to eat. One distinction and advantage of a store-keeping movement is, that there are always provisions about.

New Acts of Parliament, and the altered business of the Society, made it necessary again to alter the rules. This year the Drapery Department was in a very damp condition. What Americans call the "dry goods" sales, were low, and the directors summoned a special meeting of the members and explained matters to them, telling them they must either purchase more drapery or instruct the board to close the business, but advised its maintenance.

At this time the cotton famine prevailed in Lancashire, and the members, willingly and generously, voted £30 to be

sent to the committee engaged in alleviating the distress. All co-operative societies were friends of the North in the great American war for the maintenance of the Union and the liberation of slaves.

1863.

SMOOTH WATER—THE CLOTHING SHIP BECALMED—MEMBERS DETERMINE TO KEEP IT AT SEA.

THE sea of the Society was calm now. There were buoyant ripples of prosperity in all departments, save one—the clothing—which gave no sign of onward motion. The loss there continued. It was still as "a painted ship upon a painted ocean," as Coleridge would describe it. The loss upon the navigation of that vessel (if that should be called navigation where there is no motion) was not cheering. As it continued through several half years the directors themselves lost heart, and requested permission of the Society to cashier this ship and close this branch of its business. Herein the members showed the greater courage and declined to consent to the directors' request, and urged perseverance until they overtook success—which must be somewhere in front of them. This happy confidence was itself a presage of improvement. Profits distributed in June were paid in goods, which met the household requirements of members and the interests of the Society. The Clothing Ship did not go into the dock, but went cruising about.

1864.

AN IRRITATING ITEM — INTRICACIES OF TRUSTEESHIP — THE DEVICE OF FREE TICKET MEETINGS — WITHDRAWALS FROM NECESSITY AND ILL-WILL — OFFERS OF CAPITAL BY MEMBERS — A NEW WONDER COMES TO SIGHT — PROFIT-SHARING RECOGNISED.

AN obstinate, obnoxious, reproachful item had long irritated members in successive balance sheets, under the head of "old losses," which amounted to more than £1,000. This had been a source of remorseful controversy at every meeting until this year, when 5s. was deducted from the account of every member previous to 1863. This was done to prevent members, who might be withdrawing, from being accused of leaving losses incurred in their time to be defrayed by new members joining the Society, who could not be held responsible for losses occurring before they became members.

Thus "old losses" disappeared for ever, and perturbed half-yearly meetings no more. There was gladness at their decease, and nobody wished their resurrection. So long as the Society was incapable of holding freehold property it had to be held by trustees. The Society could not even have a license to sell tea; each license had to be taken out in the name of one of the trustees, and entered in the rate book of the township where the store was situated. The one advantage of this necessity was that the trustee gained both a municipal and parliamentary vote—though a single vote to a single person would have been thought fairer all round. But when the law was altered all property and all licenses were re-transferred to the Society.

Not liking the prevailing system of trade puffing and advertisements, and yet needing publicity for the business carried on, a series of tea meetings were devised in various parts of the town, and a free ticket was given to all members who applied for them. Thus a great number of the members were brought together, when a new social feeling and better knowledge of the Society were the results. The number of members who partook of these teas was 2,500.

About this time many necessitous members gave notice of

withdrawal from the Society, and others who were dissatisfied beyond reconciliation did the same. The Society had now funds at the bank, and could be neither intimidated nor distressed. The directors made known that all notice givers would be paid at once, rightly concluding that those who were needy ought to be relieved without delay, and those who withdrew from ill-will ought to be released. Dead branches add no vigour to the tree. The leal members were numerous enough to maintain the vitality of the Society. The trade was better than it had been for years, and loans of money were offered to assist the directors if needed. Happily they were not needed. Time was when members were not so ready to assist the directors, and had no money to do it with if they were willing. Now many members had money which the Society had made for them, and it was honourable in the new capitalists to be ready to place funds at the service of the directors. The number of members paid out was 161, and the amount was £520.

Next it was resolved to reduce the amount of shares from £5 to £2, the reason being that they had more money in hand than the directors knew how to use. If they held money at 5 per cent without employing it, it diminished the general dividend, and if they paid 5 per cent when they could borrow at 4 per cent the dividend suffered in proportion.

Here a new wonder came to sight, which has since been seen in other societies—working men, who were told they never could possess capital, and believed it themselves, had acquired more than they knew what to do with.

The old pioneers at Rochdale never had difficulty in employment of accumulated funds. They set up a profit-sharing spinning mill. It was the promise to establish profit-sharing workshops that first made co-operation popular. Their successors in Rochdale lost sight of this noble intention. Leeds had not taken this step, that was why the Society did not know what to do with its money.

Yet the directors had the wholesome principle of profit-sharing in their minds, and on discussion further decided to give the head storekeeper 10 per cent upon the whole profits when they reached £15 and upwards, and recommended the storekeepers to let their shares remain until they reached the amount of their individual bonds.

The successive details the reader has seen of the intelligent devices of administration the Leeds Society have invented, or adopted, will be instructive reading in many young stores and interesting to co-operative students.

This year the disconsolate clothing department, which had been subject to many misgivings, showed a profit of £105, and declared a dividend on purchases of 1s. 3d. in the pound. Thus the judgment of the members was justified in keeping that vessel in the navy of the stores.

1865.

BENEFICIAL ABSENTEES—NEW NAME FOR A FEROCIOUS DEPARTMENT—PROF. F. W. NEWMAN'S ARGUMENT—AN INCREDIBLE CLASS OF PURCHASERS—A FORMER DEVICE RETRIED.

AFTER getting rid of the "old losses" item and the disturbing elements had considerately withdrawn themselves, peace and prosperity set in. The profits on flour were £1,850, on groceries £568, clothing £91, on meat £64.

In Scotland meat sellers are called "fleshers," an uncomfortable term. In England meat sellers are called "butchers," which is worse, and conveys a brutal idea to the mind. Repugnance to the fact does not, however, do away with necessity. There is slaughter all over nature; but that is no reason for parading the unpleasant fact over our doors and in our balance sheets, spoiling the daily meal by obtruding associations all the more painful, since they are now mostly needless. Long ago I published a letter from Prof. F. W. Newman explaining that the death of animals for food might be rendered quite painless, and the meat made of greater value by increase in weight and intrinsically more nutritious, since loss of blood diminishes weight and wastes the richest element of animal food. Prof. Newman thought co-operators the most likely persons to care for profit and humanity. Anyhow, the horrors of terms may be avoided. Therefore, in

this narrative the "butchering department" is described under the head of meat selling.

It was not until 1865 that purchasers not members of the Society were accorded half the dividend given to members. It seems incredible that it should have required years to take so wise a step. Why outside purchasers should be refused permission to increase the profits of members, by making purchases equal to their own, no human being can tell. It is not less incredible that there should exist a class of people anxious to get all they can in a bargain, yet persist in taking only half a share of profits when they might have a full share. Yet this marvellous class of people are found in the neighbourhood of every store. There are those who believe that cupidity is wide eyed, but there are clearly numerous persons who have their acquisitive eyes only half open.

Again, a device was acted upon which was tried without result when the first shop in Briggate was opened—the device of employing a traveller to call upon the public and non-purchasing members and canvass for new members, and increase the purchasing tendencies of non-buying or half-buying members. But again the plan did not succeed.

1866.

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S SAGACITY—THOUGHT FOR SERVANTS—THE FIRST FLOOD—BENEFIT OF A RESERVE FUND.

WHEN Queen Elizabeth had a new plan of procedure she wished tried, she told her officers of State that "they might find new instructions restrictions, but, like new clothes which are a little stiff at first, they would become easy by wear." By this time the Society found the truth of the shrewd queen's saying. The new store system which after ample inquiry had been engrafted on the flour mill organisation, and which for a time produced explosions and conspiracy, now worked easily. This year there is little but confirmed prosperity to recount.

The year was marked by a handsome piece of consideration to all persons employed. The time of store servants was shortened, by closing one hour earlier in the evening. Thus the co-operators were from the first on the side of the early closing movement, and the Society was considered to have had, by its example, an influence upon shopkeepers in the town, and benefited their assistants.

In fact, as far as can be ascertained, they were the precursors of the movement in Leeds. Besides, the Society made another concession of similar importance, namely, closing the stores half a day each week. The directors were the first in Leeds to give the half-holiday per week to their store employés, an act of kindly consideration, by which employés elsewhere in Leeds came afterwards to benefit.

In November the floods came, causing a heavy loss in the grocery department, the wholesale warehouse being flooded to a great depth. The loss amounted to about £300; but this did not affect the share of profit given to members, who found the advantage of having a reserve fund from which the directors took an amount sufficient to equalise the dividend by raising it to its expected amount, 1s. 6d. Had it not been for the reserve fund, the dividend would have been only 10d.

1867.

DISCONTENT DIVINE AND DIFFERENT—COAL TRADE BEGUN—FLOUR THE STAPLE OF THE SOCIETY'S LIFE—TEST ORDERED—DISEMBODIED AGENTS WALK ABROAD—WHY STORES LAGGED BEHIND THE MILL.

ETHICAL politicians recognise that there is a "divine discontent," but the Society now and then encountered a discontent which was neither divine nor reasonable, not being founded on fact. This species of dissatisfaction recurred at times. Notwithstanding, the Society progressed step by step and prospered on the whole as it went.

This year (1867) a unanimous resolution was passed, authorising the directors to enter into the coal business.

Probably that business warmed the heart of the Society, for from year to year the coal department always made a good profit. The Society had now advanced to a position of confidence, and members were prepared to hand over to the directors any amount of capital; but for reasons the reader has seen they declined any more loans. The flour department continued, in all vicissitudes of time, trade, and contention, to make substantial profits. This year it made a profit of £1,708 upon a turnover of £30,341, and a dividend of 3s. per bag was declared. Complaints prevailed of the quality and price of the groceries. The directors, therefore, had all their goods tested, which were found equal, and in many instances superior, to the goods selected from respectable private traders. But many of those who had complained so eloquently without knowledge, now had a complaint against the knowledge which showed their complaints to be groundless. But more sensible members were glad of the information.

The meat department still showed that there was no flesh of profit on its bones, and the members at last agreed that meat selling should be ended. It was a perennial puzzle to the directors why the flour society should continue prosperous and robust, while all the other departments were pale in the face, visibly thin, and some losing flesh But there appeared no explanation save that defunct vested interests, disturbed by being superseded, had risen from their graves and were walking the earth again. Disembodied agents were certainly about. A good deal of discontent was owing to the unfamiliarity of members generally with co-operative action in their own interests, joined to ignorance of its principles. The pinch of dear flour and bad flour all the town had felt, but there was no corresponding experience which they could understand with respect to commodities in general. Dearness and adulteration were everywhere, but there had not been sufficient intelligence to detect it and resent it so effectually as in the case of flour.

Many of the flour agencies had certainly been done away with as new branches were opened—but not all of them. Thirty years later (1897), the reader, if he inquires, will learn that seven shopkeepers in various parts of the town are agents for the sale of the Society's flour.

1868

A MANAGER DISMISSED—STORM DRUMS RUN UP—A CYCLONE NEARLY BLOWS THE SOCIETY OVER—THE DIRECTORS IN A MAELSTROM.

THIS was a gusty year. As a co-operative society is open to all the world, including "Charley's Aunt," among its new recruits will always be included a succession of malcontents, some wise and some otherwise. The controversial contumacy is sure to reappear. This time it was the dismissal of one of the managers. The old error, of forming two parties about it, was repeated. Even some of the directors took the part of the man as angry partisans, and forgot the cause. They might be justified in letting their opinion be known, but not of joining a party against their colleagues and compromising the repute of the Society for orderliness and constitutional procedure. On this occasion circulars were issued, even handbills, and letters for and against the dismissal appeared in the *Leeds Express*, which intruded questions of administration of the Society's affairs upon public and unfriendly attention. This would have done no harm had the language been considerate and respectful on both sides. Indeed it might have impressed the public favourably had they seen the spectacle of a society, feeling strongly on a particular question, always preserving good temper and self-respect. Instead there were acrimonious imputations, which unsettled the members, lowered the public repute of the Society, and deterred many persons from joining it. In those days Lord Brougham's social schoolmaster was abroad in the sense of being somewhere else. The remedy for these displays was not a timid silence in the face of a supposed wrong, but a respectful, firm, but nevertheless dispassionate expression of opinion. At last the storm subsided. Not even nature can keep up a tempest for ever. The very elements of heaven get tired of fury and long for rest as much as any overworked trade-unionist. As Miss Mathilde Blind, who had sympathy with social betterance, lately wrote—

We are so tired, my heart and I,
Of all things here beneath the sky,
One only thing would please us best—
Endless unfathomable rest.

On this principle the Society was glad when the tumult of the partisan controversy was succeeded by equanimity.

Next trouble came owing to some reputed irregularity in the election of directors, which was debated in further stormy meetings to late hours, and adjournments notwithstanding. At length Mr. Swale, always a wise friend of the Society, made the judicious motion that "as the next election was near the directors remain until their successors be appointed," to which a large majority agreed. Pleasant order was once more re-established, and the maelstrom dispersed itself in mid air.

1869.

A GENERAL MANAGER PROPOSED—MONEY ABOUNDS—LARGE FORFEITS—SIXTEEN BUYERS AT LARGE IN THE MARKETS—THE DIRECTORS HAVE A PLAN—THE COAL PLANT BOUGHT—CREDIT TRIED—EXPLODED, BUT NOT KILLED.

ADMINISTRATIVE experiments were the characteristics of this year. Mr. John Edison originated a proposal that an intelligent general manager be appointed, and the number of directors be reduced, although since 1863 their number was but twelve. It was remarked that many were elected because "they were decent, steady men," a qualification at no time, nor in any society, to be despised. The "intelligent general manager" idea did not find favour, nor were the directors reduced.

Again the directors found they had more capital than they could employ with profit to the Society, and £1,000 of loans were repaid to the lenders, selecting those who had the largest amount in the Society. Upwards of £200 worth of shares were forfeited this year in consequence of not being claimed during five years. Some members who once thought they

never should own any shares had become rich enough, it would appear, not to want them, or to forget them.

At that time there were sixteen storekeepers, each of whom was allowed to purchase such articles as he thought likely to suit the buyers at the store under his charge. The consequence was commodities of varying quality, and often inferior, inundated store shelves. Not only did dissatisfaction arise, but considerable stocks of unsaleable goods accumulated. Purchasing requires special knowledge and business faculty, which are not common qualities. Besides, a storekeeper must have angelic tendencies to keep clear of presents which may divert his attention or impair his judgment. He needs to repeat the Lord's prayer every morning, "Deliver us not into temptation." Some men have tea and coffee in their blood. One will know good tea by its aroma or taste. I knew a coffee roaster in Manchester who could tell good coffee on taking the berries in his hand. But these endowments are far from being general.

Led by the light of experience, the Leeds Society resolved to trade generally with the "North of England Wholesale" department at Manchester, the name by which the present Wholesale Society was then known.

The directors brought forward an elaborate scheme of organisation—ingenious, but too complex, which did not meet with approval. It was rightly rejected on the ground of present impracticability, but had some good points. It was treated with less respect than it deserved, which tended to discourage originality where it is always desirable. The plan showed considerable thought, and must have cost much time to work it out, and being in the interest of the Society and not of a party, it had the merit of good intention though not fortunate in other respects.

The grocery department was not very animated—only a dividend of one shilling being declared. The Clifford store was closed in consequence of continued losses. It was opened with great prospect of success, but its distance from the centre of management caused it to lack necessary supervision. At the same time the Wellington Road store was opened in December, so that if one store went out another came in. Another piece of progress was assured—Mr. John Hunt and Mr. Bell were empowered to purchase the coal plant at a cost

not exceeding £450. This department was regarded as the most profitable the Society entered upon. The corn markets were now unsettled, and so unsettled the flour trade of the Society that it was difficult to sustain the average profit in it. Nevertheless, £1,184 were realised, which enabled the dividend of two shillings per bag to be paid. Three shillings had been paid previously. The clothing department continued far from robust, and in order to interest members to become purchasers, credit was allowed under certain conditions. This step is called, of the Society, an "accursed device;" anyhow, it proved to be no remedy, but a new disaster. Debts were soon contracted but not so soon paid. They were collected how they could, and the "hateful system of credit was declared to be closed at once and for ever." But credit is as tenacious of life as a cat, and sets its back up when you think it is dead.

1870.

NO INDEPENDENCE WITH DEBT—ASSOCIATIVE CONFERENCES—ADVANTAGES OF A BUYING SOCIETY—AN END OF BOVILL.

THE Society, as we have seen, wisely set its face against credit. Debt is beloved by the shopkeeper, because it chains his creditor to his counter. He who is in debt is owned by others. The flesh on the bones of his family belongs to somebody else. The meat dealer, the baker, the clothier, the tailor, and the shoemaker are the real proprietors of all they are, or have. It was co-operation that first taught the working man to own his family and to own himself.

New social devices came into operation this year. It was decided to hold quarterly conferences of the board and local committees, for the purpose of interchanging ideas on the business and working of the Society—a practice which long proved to be advantageous. A general meeting assembled, when the members unanimously decided that it was an advantage to deal with the Wholesale Society at Manchester, and the directors were "empowered to join" at once. A

wholesale buying house is a great economy in the market, a guarantee of pure commodities to members, and protects storekeepers from perpetual temptation.

This year the Society was free of Mr. Bovill on account of royalty for the use of his "cold blast." It was to the credit of the directors that they were ready to adopt any improvement which promised to be advantageous to the Society. Mr. Bovill, with his intervening patent rights, was never popular with the Society, as he is always spoken of in the *Record* "as a person named Bovill." The miller, believing himself free to use the Bovill "exhaust," had his patience exhausted by long and unforeseen payments. But inventors rightly have rights as well as millers, and it will be an ill-day for mechanical progress when genius and invention have no reward secured by law.

1871.

GROWTH ALL ROUND—STORES TOO SMALL—CUSTOMERS WAIT FOR HOURS TO BE SERVED—MORE POWERFUL MACHINES ORDERED—INCREASE IN TURNOVER AND PROFITS—SHORTER HOURS CONCEDED TO MILL HANDS.

OUR chronicle now arrives at a new kind of dissatisfaction—a salutary species of discontent that has profit in it. Growth everywhere demanded extension of premises and increase of machinery.

It was a good sign that the rules had to be again revised—not in consequence of difficulties, but to meet the growing want of the members, which was outgrowing the raiment of its youth—a pleasant sign of vigour and health.

Serious complaints arose anew, but this time of a wholesome character. Remonstrances came from several districts that the stores were inadequate to meet the requirements of the purchasers. This state of things gave the directors no disquietude since they had ample funds in hand to supply the remedy. They at once purchased land for new stores at Hunslet, Bramley, Burmantofts, and Meanwood

Road, where new buildings were forthwith commenced. The members in the Bank district were found to have outgrown the capacity of the store there. At certain times they had long to wait before they could get served. Indeed many stores complained of want of business convenience.

The flour mill also was in a similar robust difficulty. Its powers of production were severely tried. With all its facilities for grinding it could not supply the demands made upon it. Consequently a new and more powerful compound engine was bought, and other machinery, which, however, only partially met the requirements. The turnover for this year was £95,095. The profit was £7,321.

A commendable improvement was made by the time of the employés in the mill being reduced to nine hours per day. Quite as many particles of wheat as were good for the lungs could be inhaled in that period.

The drapery department alone continued, in stock-market language, considerably "under par," and its administration was completely remodelled. Its stocks were depreciated by £721, which was taken out of the reserve fund.

1872.

AN HONOURABLE VOTE—SINGULAR EDUCATION CONTEST—VOCAL WORMS CRAWL OUT—ELOQUENT FIGURES—A PROPHECY COMES TRUE DEEMED A SIGN OF INSANITY WHEN MADE.

THE manifest and well-earned prosperity of the Society was followed by an act which denoted a nobler sense than the unmitigated pursuit of dividend. The bright feature of this year was the creation of an education fund, to be managed by a separate committee, and over £200 was voted to it—1872–4. Many a stormy contest had taken place in years past upon this subject—not yet ended.

When a grant was asked for education, a curious scene was witnessed. A carnival of ignorance took place. People who had done nothing for the progress of the Society, who had never thought for it, nor spoken for it, nor worked for it,

and knew nothing of the principles which had inspired those who had built up the Society, which gave them profit—were all up in arms against the outlay of a halfpenny a month for knowledge. When they heard an educational vote was to be taken, they streamed into the meeting from all the purlieus of darkness in which they dwelt. They appeared to spring out of the floor of the hall, just as in early morning, when rain has fallen, you find all the walks alive with worms you did not expect existed in such quantities, and you can hardly step without treading upon them. So it used to be on these occasions. All the vocal worms of ignorance suddenly crawled into sight. Those who knew the least were loudest in their protests against being enlightened A small proposal met the most determined and tumultuous opposition. At a crowded meeting when a vote of £20 was asked, and Mr. Holmes was showing how a little more knowledge would tend to progress, a member called out with a strong voice, and in the broadest dialect of the locality, "We want no eddication, give us a bonus." He did not even know how the word education was spelled or pronounced, and did not want to know. He was not aware that unless someone had education there would have been no "bonus" for anybody. The man might as well have cried out, "We want no flour, give us bread." As there cannot be bread without flour, there can be no profit without knowledge how to make it. This year the worms of ignorance had acquired intelligence enough to see this.

Tables are the least alluring but the most palpably instructive portion of a narrative, saying more by a few figures than the pen can with a hundred words. The Society had now been twenty-three years in existence, and its property stood as follows:—

Freeholds	£15,921
Machinery	3,317
Horses and Carts	832
Sacks	560
Fixtures and Movables	971
Investments	796
Stock on hand	12,215
Cash in hand	8,190
	£42,802

Another step of mark was taken this year. The directors recommended the members to elect a Building Committee to bring into use a large amount of unproductive capital lying at the bank. Leeds was the first society which had a building department.

In December, a grand tea and meeting were held in the People's Hall to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Society.

For the half year ending June, the total profits were £4,614. 10s. 9d.; in the half year ending December, the profits were £6,097. 17s.—making a total of £10,712. 7s. 9d. This was the first year in which the profits amounted to £10,000 and more.

Mr. John Holmes some fifteen years before this date, in one of his fervid speeches urging the Society to enter upon the provision business, predicted that the time would come when they would make £10,000 profit in a year. It was then that one of the incredulous members exclaimed, "Johnny has a tile off." The man who made the exclamation had no tiles to get loose, for he had no tiles upon his head of the far-seeing kind. Had he lived to this year, as we hope he did, he would find that the co-operative prophecy had come true.

1873.

A YEAR OF PRINCIPLE—STORES ARISE AROUND—READY-MADE CLOTHING BEGUN — BOOT MANUFACTURE COMMENCED — STOREKEEPERS ACCORDED PROFITS—SUPPORT GIVEN TO CO-OPERATIVE WORKSHOPS—LARGE GRANTS—HOUSE BUILDING FOR MEMBERS—PRODUCERS MORE MERITORIOUS THAN CONSUMERS—A CONSISTENT CO-OPERATIVE RESOLUTION—STRIKING REPORT OF THE EDUCATIONAL COMMITTEE—"LEEDS MERCURY" OFFICE BOUGHT—FINANCIAL PROGRESS.

IN this year, Mr. Whalley, who had been in the service of the Society as grocery storekeeper for about seven years, was appointed to the office of general manager and buyer of the grocery department.

The increase of members continued and caused such a demand for flour that the mill had to run day and night, as it had often done before from a similar auspicious cause.

Land at Beeston Hill was bought for a new store. This was a notable extension year, no fewer than eleven new stores were opened. The directors further recommended the members to enter into another business, that of furniture dealers and ready-made clothiers, which was becoming a staple business in Leeds.

The retail boot and shoe business was commenced in 1859, and was worked in conjunction with the clothing business.

The manufacture of boots and shoes was commenced in 1873.

Mr. Joseph Swallow was appointed manager of this department in February, 1876.

It is further worthy of special record that the Grocery Committee decided to give a share of profits to storekeepers, as follows: 10 per cent upon £40 out of every £60 of profit. The head storekeeper to have one-fifth part, the remainder to be divided among the assistants according to their wages.

Two investments were made, showing the interest of members in other co-operative undertakings. One hundred £1 shares were taken in the Airedale Manufacturing Society, one hundred in the Hebden Bridge Fustian Manufacturing Company, and two hundred shares in the Leeds and Yorkshire Coal Mining Company.

The directors wisely began to create a natural, it may be called a domestic, outlet for surplus capital. They decided to assist the members to build houses for themselves, and appointed a practical committee for that purpose. The persons elected were: Mr. Joseph Judd, bricklayer; Mr. H. Sanderson, joiner; Mr. J. Newell, builder; Mr. J. Taffinder, painter; Mr. Thomas Howdill, joiner; to whom the directors made a grant of £3,000, and subsequently one of £7,000.

The oft-discussed and oft-deferred question of profit-sharing with labour generally, was again considered by the Society, showing that members had a permanent conscience. Consistency demanded that when profit was accorded to the consumer it was also, and more, due to the producer. There is no virtue in eating—that is a necessity—but there is virtue in working. Labour is nobler than appetite. Appetite comes

by nature, while labour is a choice of industrious men, and great numbers never make it, but strive, or contrive and prefer to live upon the labour of others. The better class of members agreed with Napoleon's saying, "Respect the bearer of burdens;" and a resolution was moved, "That the directors be required to make arrangements for paying the same amount of bonus on wages that is paid on members' purchases." This was not carried, in a meeting of whom all were, or had been, workmen. That they should vote against the interests of their own order shows how slow improvement marches, and that only education can accelerate it. Workmen were always slaves, and the slave spirit seems an inheritance. A different resolution was passed, "That in the opinion of this meeting 'Bonus to Labour' is in accordance with the true principles of co-operation." This was for a time a barren resolution, though useful as a testimony to principle. It was said at the time "to be no unusual thing to pass resolutions at meetings and nothing more be heard of them. Co-operators are no exception to this rule." Still the principle does not die while thus re-affirmed.

It was not understood in the co-operative movement at large that true friends of participation in profit always existed in the Leeds Society. Yet not many understood the motto of the *Leeds Express* that "right and duty are like two palm trees which bear no fruit, unless they grow by the side of each other."

The department of knowledge made a gratifying announcement. The Education Committee (appointed by the members) reported that "they had made good use of the grant voted them, having had a series of first-class lectures on co-operation and kindred subjects, delivered at the People's Hall and in other localities, to members and the public free, the whole of which were well attended and evidently appreciated. They had also agreed to become *guarantors* to the scheme of University Extension in Leeds, to the extent of £40, believing it to be a step in the right direction, and would urge upon members to join the classes with spirit, and thus help to make the experiment a positive success." Reading-rooms and libraries were in operation at Holbeck and Pudsey, and it was intended to extend them to other places as opportunities occurred. The following remark is made:—

"It is hoped that when the New Corn Mill gets fairly in working order that the claims upon us of the Yorkshire College will not be forgotten, but that the members will not only vote a sum to the building fund, but that they will vote a sum to endow a scholarship, to be held by the children of members only."

This was before the scholarships of Hughes and Neale were founded or thought of.

To secure good central premises which had long been needed, the committee advertised for a site. Messrs. Hindle and Son replied, offering the old *Leeds Mercury* office premises in Albion Street. Mr. Tabbern, president, Mr. J. Speed, Mr. W. Bell, and Mr. Thomas were appointed to arrange with Messrs. Baines and Sons to purchase the premises for the sum of £8,500. The alterations cost a further sum of £3,000.

The turnover this year reached £249,003; the profit to £19,933. The number of members now stood at 11,365.

1874.

PROSPERITY AND SPECULATION—DEMONSTRATIONS TELL—A MEMORABLE OPENING—A SPLENDID PROCESSION—NOTABLE SPEAKERS AT NIGHT—INCREASE IN MEMBERS AND PROFITS—THE TALLERMAN RESOLUTION—AMAZING INVESTMENT IN THE TIPTON GREEN COLLIERY—£19,000 LOST—THE MORLEY COLLIERY A CANDIDATE FOR SURPLUS MONEY—A PRUDENT AMENDMENT—A CONVALESCENT HOME PROPOSED—THE CREDIT SNAKE STILL CRAWLING ABOUT—A FURTHER EDUCATION VOTE—MR. FAWCETT BECOMES CASHIER.

WE now come upon a year of marvellous success and perilous speculation. It was found that the demonstration of the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Society had led to an increase of members and business. The display of the Society's property in this procession made known to the public the astonishing growth of working-class enterprise.

The *Yorkshire Post* reported that on the opening of these

Central Stores a grand demonstration was made by a procession of the vehicles and wagons belonging to the Society, containing the officers and chief members, drawn by eighteen of their own horses, gaily caparisoned. The start was from the Holbeck Stores, headed by three bands of music—the Leeds Model Band, the Stanningley, and the Bramley—played through some of the principal streets to the Town Hall, passing the new Stores in Albion Street, in the front of which an immense crowd had congregated. The whole route was lined with spectators, which in Albion Street was most dense. Afterwards the members and friends of the Society took tea at the Town Hall—real tea in the urns was made this time for 2,500 people. Considerably more persons were present. After tea the doors were thrown open to the public, but the Hall was inadequate to hold the concourse of people who had been waiting outside. Hundreds were turned away. At the meeting, Mr. Tabbern (president) occupied the chair. Among those on the platform were the Mayor (Alderman Marsden); Alderman Carter, M.P.; Mr. A. Briggs, of the Whitwood Collieries; Mr. W. Nuttall, then late secretary to the Co-operative Central Board; Dr. Rutherford, manager of the Ouseburn Engine Works, Newcastle; Mr. J. Holmes; Mr. J. Crabtree (Heckmondwike), President of the North of England Co-operative Society; Councillor Gaunt; the Rev. Dr. Barnes, vicar of Little Holbeck; and Mr. Vansittart Neale, Barrister-at-Law. Speeches were delivered by Walter Morrison, Esq., Thomas Hughes, Esq., Q.C., A. J. Mundella, Esq., Dr. John Watts, Dr. Lees, and others. This was a famous day for the Society. The names show the historic friends of the cause in those days, never assembled on any other platform at the same time. From beginning to end enthusiasm prevailed.

These proceedings gave a further impetus to the Society, and increased the favour and surprise of the people of the town. The turnover at the end of the year had increased to £327,812, capital to £97,566, net profit to £25,761, and the number of members to 14,009.

New stores were opened at Rothwell, Beeston Hill, and Farnley.

At this time Mr. Tallerman, a fervent pioneer of Australian trade, had heard that the Leeds Society contained a number of intelligent consumers, and offered to supply the July Con-

ference Tea with a variety of their meat importations, which were accepted, eaten, and approved of. After tea an experience meeting was held as to the quality of the food partaken of. All the speakers declared that now their practical experience with the various products of Australia had quite dissipated their prejudices against foreign meat. A unanimous resolution was passed in favour of "the meats being both good and nutritious." This was more than they knew. Nutritiousness is only proved by time. The friendly resolution was beyond the knowledge of the meeting.

A well-intended investment was made, based upon insufficient knowledge, which proved unsuccessful, namely, the money invested in the Tipton Green Colliery; and as it was eventually all lost, there was a good deal of squealing in the Society.

It is a question whether the directors or the members were the most in favour of this scheme, which was alluringly laid before the members by Mr. John Holmes, Mr. R. M. Carter, and others. The directors recommended that the Society should take up £15,000 worth of shares. The general meeting was made special, so that the members could legally deal with this question. Mr. John Holmes moved, "That the directors be empowered to invest in the Tipton Green Colliery up to £25,000 on behalf of the Society." An amendment was moved by Mr. W. Swallow, "That the directors be requested to take two hundred £5 shares in the Morley Colliery Company in accordance with a resolution passed August 13th, 1873." The safer amendment was lost. The motion with respect to Tipton Green Colliery was carried almost unanimously.

At a directors meeting it was decided to receive loans at 5 per cent per annum for the purpose of raising £15,000 for Tipton Green. This was all done *before* the company was even registered. Mr. Holmes applied to be appointed on the Tipton board of directors, but the appointment was given to Mr. Tabbern, who was then president. This company paid at first, 10 per cent dividend, but whether it was ever earned was not known. Altogether the loss of the Society was £19,298, which was written off as a bad debt two years later.

Mr. R. M. Carter strongly recommended the directors to take up £5,000 worth of shares in the "Blakely Hall Colliery Company, Birmingham." The directors considered the subject

at several meetings. It was decided that several of them should visit the colliery and see for themselves. This was done, and those who went reported very favourably upon it. A special meeting of the members was called in December to consider the subject; and after considerable discussion a sensible resolution was moved by Mr. J. B. Baldwin, "That this meeting, having heard the statement respecting the advisability of investing in the Blakely Hall Colliery Company, recommend our directors to refrain from making application at present for any shares therein." The reasons assigned for this resolution show the shrewdness of some of the members, viz.:—

1. Because already one-sixth of our capital is invested in coal companies.

2. Because its operations are so far away from the Society.

3. Because it is desirable when making investments that we should be actuated by a true co-operative spirit.

After considerable discussion, the resolution was carried almost unanimously. It was fortunate that the members declined, for the money would have been lost, like the Tipton Green shares.

The reasons for this Tipton Green venture are difficult to determine to-day. There were no intrinsic attractions for co-operators in it. It was a mere capitalistic speculation. The miners whose lives are at hourly peril were not to be given a share of the profits. The high dividend expected implied high risk, and loss could be no surprise. Mr. Baldwin's amendment has the singular phrase, "the directors be requested to *refrain* from investing." There seems to have been an impetuosity that way. Directors and members alike concurred in the speculation, and it was unbusinesslike to complain when the colliery turned out to be a coal well with no bottom.

At a quarterly meeting held in the Philosophical Hall, Mr. Campbell brought forward a proposal for the establishment of a Convalescent Home. A committee was appointed of which Mr. Wm. Bell, Mr. Wm. Campbell, Mr. Richard Tabbern, and five others were members to contrive a plan. At a further meeting, held in the Mechanics' Institution, the Society was recommended to lease or purchase forty or fifty acres of land for the purpose, not nearer than two miles nor more than sixteen from Leeds. Mr. Campbell was appointed hon. secretary.

Credit, thought to be dead, again became a trouble. Credit, like error, is a snake alive at both ends, if cut in two it still wriggles; they who intend to kill it must keep chopping at it so long as it moves.

The education of members was well attended to at this time, for there were newsrooms and libraries at Holbeck, Bramley, Armley, Pudsey, West End, Hunslet, Bank, Beeston Hill, and Burmantofts, and at the half-yearly meeting £100 was granted to the Educational Committee.

This year Mr. J. W. Fawcett, the present secretary, was first engaged in the service of the Society as cashier. Testimony was borne to his notable qualities of industry, uprightness, honesty, and painstakingness.

1875.

NEW ORLEANS COMPANY FLOATERS COME LEEDS WAY—PROFIT-SHARING SUSPENDED—THE MILL ENLARGED AGAIN—MORE LAND BOUGHT—FIFTY-ONE COTTAGES BUILT—CARLTON HILL ESTATE BOUGHT—THE CONVALESCENT HOME "INOPPORTUNE"—THE LION ESTATE UNDER CONSIDERATION.

SPECULATION still had attraction. Not Tipton Green, but New Orleans this time. All speculation has restless wings. This time it flew to the Mississippi Valley. It went further than Tipton Green but fared no better. Another special meeting was held to hear a statement from Dr. Worrall, managing director of the Mississippi Valley Trading Company. We saw Dr. Worrall at the London Congress that year, but there were no hooks in his story on which you could hang a safe conclusion. This Worrall Company purported to be formed for the purpose of *exchanging* the produce of the Mississippi Valley for the goods manufactured in this country. The Leeds Society was to be appointed agents in England. Mr. Neale, Dr. Rutherford, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, and Mr. John Thomas, of Leeds, were sent over, at the expense of the company, it was believed, to inspect the land. Their report

was favourable to the undertaking. After a very long and animated debate, Mr. J. B. Baldwin, heretofore circumspect, moved, "That the directors be recommended to take up £2,000 in shares in that company," and at the next board meeting the directors agreed to apply for and pay the £2,000 for shares. The company exploded, and the Society lost about £450 in that venture. Thus, as might have been foreseen, the expenses of the deputation had to be defrayed by the Society. No account was taken in Leeds of what was well known in America of the trade rivalry and political jealousies of North and South, and that no trading transit could be had without the concurrence of the North, save by deepening the New Orleans river. A hundred times the amount sunk in the Tipton Green Colliery had been sunk in the New Orleans river without making an impression on its navigableness. It did not occur to Dr. Worrall to tell all he knew, and his colleagues in New Orleans were not more communicative, so the Society and deputation were misled.

The question of participation in profit by the storekeepers was especially before the Board, and it was decided, after considerable discussion, to take it away. But in place of it, their wages were to be taken into consideration, with a view to compensating them for the loss of their share. Some thought it bartering a co-operative right for wages, and that principle dropped out in the transaction. However, it took away the stimulus of gain in proportion to exertion, by which the middle class grow vigilant and rich.

The mill was again unable to supply the necessary quantity of flour required by the members and the public, consequently extensive alterations and additions had to be made in the mill, and machinery to meet the increased demand.

Two new stores were opened and land bought for three more, in addition to building fifty-one cottages, at a cost of £12,503. This was far better than Mississippi investments—too far away to be under control.

The Carlton Hill estate was purchased for the erection of a better class of houses. It consisted of 3,630 yards, and cost £1,015.

The Committee of the Convalescent Home had inspected a suitable estate of sixty acres. At the half-yearly meeting they made their report. The meeting decided that the scheme

was not "opportune." Why could they not think of this useful term when the Mississippi scheme was before them?

When the Golden Lion estate was in the market, the directors were desired to secure the corner site for the new stores. Before venturing upon its purchase, the directors prudently obtained plans of the estate, showing what could be retained with advantage to the Society, and what portion sold. Mr. Ambler, one of the eminent architects of the town, made the necessary drawings. After a considerable amount of expense and time had been incurred, the meeting determined not to buy it. The Lion estate would have been a Royal holding, even if they had no Unicorn Manor to match it. There was money in the name.

1876.

DOLOUR IN ALL THE STORES—DIRECTORS CHECK THE PANIC BUT NOT THE WEEPING—THE PHILOSOPHY OF INVESTMENT—ANOTHER EDUCATION TUMULT — THE MISTAKE THAT IGNORANCE IS HARMLESS—INCREASE OF STORES, HOUSES, AND LAND—HANDSOME CONSIDERATION FOR DISTRESSED MEMBERS—NEW MACHINERY COSTS £4,000—OFFICIAL SHYNESS OF THE MEAT TRADE—DIRECTORS BETTER PAID—A GENERAL STORE VISITOR APPOINTED—HIS MULTITUDINOUS DUTIES.

WHEN the news of the loss of the £19,000 in the Tipton Green Colliery got noised abroad, as such things do, a crowd of those willing to gain without the risk of losing, and many who had too little not to be alarmed at losing that, rushed forward to give notice of withdrawing their shares. The directors prudently called in their balance at the bankers and met the demands without exacting the usual notice. This restored confidence, and those who withdrew their money soon brought it back again. As the members applauded the investment it was undignified to mourn the loss. In all undertakings the wise rule is to be prepared to lose as well as willing to gain. Those invited to invest should be told the

risk, then none repent or have reproach for what they do with their eyes open, nor lose courage to embrace a good opportunity when it comes.

When new shares had to be taken in an Intelligence Company, which always pays good dividends, a large number of members were injuriously careful.

Mr. F. Curzon, an indefatigable advocate of the power of education being put into the hands of the working man, succeeded in obtaining a grant of £100. The meeting, however, was so turbulent that it was cited as a new argument proving the necessity of education. The meeting did not conclude until eleven o'clock. The newspapers report characterise the assembly as "disorderly."

It was worth the while of the Society to agree to a permanent educational vote, to avoid the scandal which ignorance was bringing upon the members. Ignorance is not inactive, as some people suppose. On the contrary it is the most mischievous thing in the world—either doing harm when it does anything, or doing harm by preventing other people doing good. The vote that caused all the tumult was but £100 out of £14,000 of profit. It meant only one half-pint of beer less in twelve months.

Trade being bad in the district, many notices of withdrawal were given. As not more than ten persons could withdraw in one quarter, the directors proposed to make a reduction of 3s. from all persons withdrawing in excess of the legal number. As this rule pressed hardest upon the most needy, they decided to pay off at once all persons who had already given notice, and that in future all cases of members in distress should be allowed to withdraw down to the amount of £1.

Later in the same year a great number of withdrawals confronted the directors. In case of need they found their bankers were willing to advance £10,000, which by good management they never required. The withdrawals notwithstanding, the Meanwood store was opened, thirteen houses at Beeston Hill and fourteen houses at Burley Fields were completed, and land was purchased for stores at Hunslet Road and Farsley.

A new condensing engine was bought of thirty-five horse-power, which cost £1,015. A new forty horse-power boiler cost £340. Other outlays required made a total of £4,000.

The question of recommencing the meat trade came up for consideration, motion being made that live cattle should be purchased and prepared for sale on the Society's own premises. This was carried unanimously. The directors made exhaustive inquiries, and alarmed by what they learned and by former experience, took no steps to carry out the resolution but let the subject drop.

Owing to the increased and ever-increasing duties of the directors it was resolved to augment their payment from £30 to £60 per annum, to be equally divided among them. It is wise to pay well for duties which require thought. Investment in capacity always yields good results. Mr. Emmerson stated, before the Parliamentary Committee of 1856, that up to that date, during nine years the directors had never received one halfpenny for their anxious, onerous, and laborious services. So it was not too soon to begin to *better* remunerate their successors.

The increase of stores made evident the need of a Stores Visitor. As this required a person in whom implicit confidence could be placed, Mr. John Thomas was appointed. It is no mean praise, having regard to his onerous duties, that he gave the Society entire satisfaction. He proved to be that rare person, a good all-round man, which he needed to be seeing what his duties were. He was to visit *each* store *every* week, enter in a book, kept at the store, the condition he found it in, also make a copy in another book, and enter any remarks he thought might improve the working of the stores; the book to be laid before the Stores Committee every week. He was to be at the call of this committee at *any time* and also be utilised by the other committees as circumstances required. He was charged with the collection of all the rents, to look after the property, and to provide everything necessary for the great number of teas continually being held, and a great number of other things, as auctioneers say, "too numerous to mention."

1877.

ANOTHER EDUCATIONAL BATTLE — IGNORANCE WINS — MORE STORES OPENED — FLOUR MILL MACHINERY AGAIN INCREASED—ITS PRODUCING POWER DOUBLED.

BROUGHAM said of Lord Liverpool, our Premier for fifteen years—"If you brayed him in a mortar you could not bray the prejudices out of him." Members of the Lord Liverpool order abounded on the question of education. Still the leading members stood gallantly by the question. The subject of making a grant for this purpose had to be considered every year. As the consideration of the half-yearly balance sheet and report occupied the whole of the time of the meeting, it was decided to hold a special meeting to consider this question, when Mr. Wilberforce moved "That a grant of £100 be made, same as last year, for educational purposes." He made an eloquent appeal to the members not to be behindhand in this all-important question, but to show to the world that they were not merely dividend-seekers but friendly to intelligence, the want of which was the chief stumbling block in the way of industrial progress. If they rejected the motion, they would some day regret it. The appeal fell upon stony ground, for it took no root, or withered as it fell, owing to the arid atmosphere. The majority of the members had made up their minds that no money should be spent (if they could help it) on education; thus the subject died this time.

Still general progress went on, which might have gone on faster, with a greater number of intelligent members to aid it. New stores were opened at Hyde Park Road, St. Mark's Road, Larchfield or Hunslet Road, York Road, Hogg's Field (Holbeck), and one for drapery and boots at York Road.

Further demands were made upon the flour mill, and the directors were again impelled to increase the corn-grinding machinery. The Society was then able to manufacture double the quantity of flour it had previously made.

1878.

FURTHER BATTLE FOR EDUCATION—THE PROPAGANDISTS DEFEATED—AN INDIGNANT NIGHT—A SAGACIOUS MOTION—THIEVES DISCOVERED—GENEROSITY OF THE SOCIETY AT HOME AND ABROAD—BAREBONE REPORTS—GROWTH ALL ALONG THE LINE—FOUNDATION OF AN ANNUAL HOLIDAY.

THE motto of co-operative thrift is that of Epicurus—"Abstain in order to enjoy." That is true all life through, but only the intelligent know it. There were still a substantial number of co-operators about Leeds stores who did not understand this, and would not abstain from taking all for dividend though they or their children might otherwise enjoy the princely luxury of knowledge.

A special general meeting was called to consider certain new building rules, in which a clause was, with good forethought, inserted, proposing that ¾ per cent of the net profit should be devoted to propagandist work. This was the first time the word "propagandist" occurred in a resolution of the Society. The profits to be assessed—¾ per cent—came out of no member's pocket, but were a surplusage arising out of transactions which gave them good houses, otherwise unattainable and unpurchasable by them in Leeds. Three-quarters per cent was a very small proportion of profit to give towards increasing their own opportunities of gain, besides gratefully extending to others that knowledge which had enabled them to be in a position to vote upon profits accruing to them. But the mere proposal threw the meeting into a fit of hysterical economy. It became uproarious and bitter. At last the president peremptorily closed the meeting at 10-30 without any vote being taken. Had early and later leaders, directors, and thinkers been as selfishly economical, there would have been no Society. They gave, not ¾ per cent, but 50 per cent of their time, without a penny of reward, and now the Society was landed in prosperity the members who took the profits refused with clamour ¾ per cent for their own instruction.

An indignant night was given by a special general meeting

to the consideration of a handbill signed "Daylight," which might have been answered by another placard signed Limelight. It was not worth a night's discussion. A vote of confidence was passed in the directors, which was paying a great compliment to "Daylight," as it implied than an anonymous asperser could affect the character of directors, whom all knew, and who had served the Society well. Mr. Campbell moved, "That the handbill signed 'Daylight' was untruthful and malicious, and the writer deserving of the strongest censure." Contempt would have been a fitter word. The motion was carried unanimously, with the exception of one member, Mr. B. Wrigley, who was openly accused, and did not deny having written the condemned handbill.

Again, the directors had on hand more money than they could profitably employ, and decided to close the loan account. At this time £11,000 were lying in the bank upon which interest was being paid and nothing earned by it. It was suggested that the holdings of the largest shareholders should be reduced by paying them back part of their saving. Mr. Wilberforce, whose sonorous voice is itself an argument, opposed this step. It was said that he spoke in his "usual solemn and persuasive manner." Weighty would be a better word. At Congresses we have often heard persuasive speeches from him which had a buoyant vivacity in them. He urged, on this occasion, that the money be not returned to the members, which many of them had probably pinched themselves not a little to save against a rainy day. Some might spend it not knowing where to invest it. When we need money we urged them to save. It was not nice to say we don't want it now—so take it back. He strongly recommended the directors to lend it on good freehold mortgage security, or to building societies in the town, and moved a resolution to that effect, which was carried by a large majority.

At the half-yearly stocktaking in the Albion Street drapery department, Mr. Tabbern, one of the then directors, appointed to take this stock, reported a very large deficiency in that department, and that a quantity of goods were missing To clear the matter up, communications were made to the police. By this promptness the thief and accomplices were soon arrested. It was found that one of the assistants in the retail department made arrangements with associates to visit the

shop when other assistants were at dinner. Then the goods were passed over to them, who either sold or pawned them. Ultimately the assistant was sentenced to twelve months, and two accomplices for eighteen months each. The value of goods recovered amounted to near £400.

Great distress prevailing in Leeds, the Mayor opened a distress fund. The committee generously sent fifty bags of flour for distribution among needy families. In addition, £10 were voted to the directors to distribute among present and past members in need. Many co-operators had prudently accumulated money which enabled them to tide over temporary shortness of work.

There being great distress in the colliery districts in South Wales, through short work, an appeal was sent to the Leeds Society which generously voted £50 for their relief, to be sent to the two co-operative societies there, to be distributed as they thought best.

In consequence of the new Industrial and Provident Societies Acts, the Leeds rules were again revised to keep them in accordance with the new laws.

A proposal was made that the president and directors should be elected by the local committee in quarterly conference assembled. It was rejected. For what reason no record tells. It is a defect of official co-operative reports elsewhere also, that they state what has been done, but not *why* it was done, nor indicate the essence of the arguments for and against the resolution adopted. This is the most instructive part of a business report, and in a democratic association essential, if intelligent interest is to be awakened and sustained. Barebone reports are no help; they only tire.

Two new stores were opened at Kirkstall and Farsley. New stores were opened for boots and drapery at Wellington Road, and for boots only at Farsley. Premises were purchased at Littlemoor, Pudsey, and opened as a grocery store; Pudsey store being found too small for its custom. Land was purchased for new stores at Tong Road, Roundhay Road, and Whingate Road, Armley. The profit made on grocery was the largest realised in one half year.

The storekeepers and their assistants made application to the directors to be allowed to make arrangements for a cheap trip on some Wednesday afternoon, when the stores were

closed; the directors not only granted them their request, but decided that the stores should be closed the *whole* of the day. This has now become an annual holiday trip for the whole of the employés of the Society, and is now arranged and managed by the directors, and always anticipated with pleasure. If not new, it was not common in Leeds.

1879.

GENEROSITY A FORM OF PROGRESS—LIST OF GRANTS TO CHARITIES—A BAKERY SPRINGS UP IN A NIGHT—ITS PREVIOUS TARDINESS—THE PRUDENCE OF TAKING IN THE "CO-OPERATIVE NEWS"—NON-BUYING MEMBERS DISAPPEAR—A WISE DEVICE—DEATH OF A VALUED PRESIDENT—THE BUSINESS OF THE SOCIETY RUNNING ON CASTORS.

GIFTS not only show good nature but bring repute. Influential members of the community, who never imagined that working people could largely acquire property, began to look favourably on co-operators who were not only prosperous but generous. Grateful letters came from the Welsh colliers, who recognised in the aid sent them what they called the "co operative spirit." The Society had for some years contributed to six charities in the town, to which they had given the sums enumerated as follow, and lately increased the amounts as the reader will see in the second column—

		£	s.		£	s.
Leeds Infirmary..... increased from		8	8	to	12	12
Hospital for Women and Children	,,	10	0	,,	15	0
Dispensary.....	,,	5	5	,,	8	8
House of Recovery	,,	5	5	,,	7	7
Cookridge Convalescent Home ...	,,	5	5	,,	10	10
Institution for the Blind	,,	5	5	,,	7	7

making a total increase from £39. 8s. to £61. 4s.

A bakery had come into the minds of the members. Mr. Wilberforce announced that land adjoining the mill had already been purchased, and a bakery would soon appear upon it. It seemed to spring up, like Jonah's gourd, in a night. It seems odd that a great Flour Society should have existed thirty-two years before it thought of a bakery. If indeed it was thought of, the thought took no form of action.

The *Co-operative News* not being purchased by members as largely as the directors thought it should be, it was resolved to sell it at one halfpenny. Shareholders in other companies, which probably lose all their money, subscribe to the paper representing their interest, whether it be 3d. or 6d., while co-operators, who have joined a company which makes money for them, without their subscribing any, are far less prompt to take in the *Co-operative News* at a penny. Yet an official organ with a commanding circulation is an advantage to all.

There are in every society nominal members who do little or no trade with it. At the end of June this year 2,836 persons of this description were struck off the list, which still left 16,554 trading members. The amount forfeited by these cancelled persons amounted to £762, which went to enrich the Reserve Fund. One day some ingenious person will treat non-dealing members as a second class. Those who have once joined the Society must have some available good in them which might be turned to account.

A system of purchasing checks from members in need, unable to wait for the day of dividend, often led to their checks being parted with far below their value. To prevent this loss an arrangement was made for purchasing checks at the central office at fixed rates—a device which brought convenience and advantage to the selling members and profit to the Society.

In March the Society lost a tried friend and hard worker by the sudden death of Mr. John Speed, who was at the board meeting on the 11th of March, and died before the next meeting on the 18th. He had filled all the chief positions in the Society. In the chapter on presidents a further notice appears.

The directors were now thirteen in number. Four new stores were opened at Carlton Hill, Whingate Road, Armley, Roundhay Road, and Roxburgh Road—all doing good business.

Premises were taken in Meadow Road and altered to suit the trade there. Contracts were entered into for a new fireproof grocery warehouse in Manor Road, which increasing trade made necessary. The corner stone of the new store at Whingate Road was laid by Mr. W. Baxter, one of the directors, and land was purchased for new stores at Lofthouse, Beckett Street, and Stanningley, besides the large plot of land adjoining the mill at a cost of £2,207, for further extensions. The Society by this time had acquired a habit of looking forward and providing for the future.

Store building never lagged behind purchase, and use never lagged behind erecting. The Tong Road store was opened. The corner stone of the Roundhay Road store was laid by Mr. John Teasdill. The corner stone of the Carlton Hill store was laid by Mr. Wm. Emsley. Their names are carved on stone in the usual manner, and the record of their services is thus preserved. Mr. Maynard was appointed manager of the corn mill, and won praise for intelligence and business capacity. This year the business of the Society ran on castors.

1880.

SERVICES OF DIRECTORS RECOGNISED—CONGRESS INVITED TO LEEDS—A LIBRARY AND NEWSROOM ESTABLISHED—MR. FAWCETT APPOINTED SECRETARY AND CASHIER — A BOARD CLERK ELECTED — ANOTHER ASPERSER EXTINGUISHED BY FACTS—THE COMPOSITION OF PURE BUTTER—MEAT SELLING STILL "INOPPORTUNE"—THE GREAT SNOW NIGHT—LOSS OF TWO LEADERS — THE SOCIETY STILL GROWING.

TIN checks upon purchases of flour were given to members only, and their share of profit was estimated upon the tins. It now became the rule to give tins to all purchasers of flour. The new plan was calculated to interest the outside public to become purchasers. This was virtually a tin suffrage act,

The £60 per half year awarded to directors was increased to £80. The number of members had increased, assets had increased, the business had increased, the profits made were greater, and the labour of the directorship greater. It was fair that those who were guiding the Society to larger prosperity should share with the members in the benefits. The increase would have been fairer had it been larger. The whole sum was little more than one penny per member for the half year. The duties of the directors occupied them two, three, and sometimes four nights a week until 10-30 at night.

Messrs. William Bell, R. Tabbern, and W. Baxter were the delegates to Newcastle-on-Tyne, to invite the Congress assembling there to meet, in 1881, in Leeds, which was unanimously agreed to. The report that the invitation was accepted was received with pleasure, and the directors authorised to give the Congress a Yorkshire welcome when they came. And it was given. It was a memorable Congress in its way, but this is not the place to particularise it.

Rooms were taken at a rental of £100 over the London and Yorkshire Bank for the purpose of a newsroom and library on one floor, and a room above for a board and committee purposes. This showed that intelligence was becoming a commodity supplied by the Society. The newsroom was well supplied with newspapers and periodicals, and was well frequented, and like the library—brought in the germ state from Holbeck—became popular. A hope was expressed that members would see their way to make a permanent grant out of profits, to sustain these and similar rooms. The Rochdale Society never had these hopes deferred, because they began by providing ample instruction for their members.

The Board decided that the offices of general secretary and cashier should be united, and Mr. J. W. Fawcett was deemed the fittest person to undertake the joint duties. He was elected unanimously. A new officer, Mr. Tabbern, was chosen to attend the board and committee meetings, under the title of "Board Clerk." Mr. Tabbern, in all his duties (and there were others assigned him), was a real co-operator who cared for the Society, who knew well its workings, and having good knowledge of business, of engineering and machinery in general, was much valued by the members.

Some person who either knew that what he said was not

true; or was too ignorant to know that it was untrue; or too negligent to ascertain what the truth was—sent word to the sanitary inspector that the Society was selling adulterated articles. The inspector bought specimens of oatmeal, butter, and coffee. The directors at once determined to have those articles analysed by the Bradford borough analyst, who gave certificates that all the articles were what they professed to be—genuine. The butter was found to consist—

Water	9·35
Salt	2·78
Casein or Curd	0·45
Butter Fat	87·42
	100·00

As this is the composition of good butter, the reader may be glad to have the analysis before him.

Mr. Wilberforce read a report on the possibilities of resuming the meat trade, prepared by Mr. Thomas, who had visited many societies gathering relevant facts. Subsequently Mr. Turner Tetley explained the subject in a very lucid manner to a quarterly conference. On the motion of the Rev. John Bell, who could not be an authority upon the subject, it was decided that it was inopportune to recommence the business.

On October 22nd occurred the great Snow Night, the only instance when the proceedings of the Society were arrested by the elements. A quarterly meeting was called in the People's Hall for 7-30, Mr. Wm. Bell, president, and thirty or forty others were present, but not the required fifty to make a quorum. Mr. Bell opened the proceedings and talked to kill time. It was said no one knew better than Mr. Bell how to do that. This was a very equivocal compliment, but it merely meant that Mr. Bell had great facility of speech and always an abundance of ideas on hand.

In the House of Commons forty members are required to be present before business can be done; in the Leeds Society fifty is the number, and the meeting had to be closed. It was a night when rain, snow, and wind made a joint-stock tempest, a night on which no one ought to have been out. It was creditable enthusiasm in those who went to the meeting.

A dreadful colliery explosion took place at Seaham. The members at once voted £50 to alleviate the suffering families.

The Society lost by death the service of Mr. W. S. Roberts, a director, who had been an energetic and useful member. In another way they lost the services of Mr. W. Swallow, who had been secretary for about six years, and who had great energy and organising ability.

New stores were opened in Beckett Street and Meadow Road, and land purchased in Somerby Street and Kirkstall Road for new stores to be erected. Not obtaining support for their drapery at Bramley the store was reluctantly closed. New stores were opened at Lofthouse, Stanningley, and Somerby Street, Burley Road. The net increase of members for the year was 1,256.

1881.

THE GREAT CONFLAGRATION—COSTLY ECCENTRICITY OF THE TOWN BRIGADE—SINGULAR ORIGIN OF THE FIRE—THE PROCESS OF FLOUR MAKING—AN "UNDESIRABLE" MOTION—BUILDING AT CARLTON HILL—REPORT IN FAVOUR OF THE WHOLESALE—A FULL DRESS DEBATE—AN AMALGAMATED MANAGER—FORGED CHECKS—THE NEW BAKERY OPENED—AN INUNDATION OF MONEY—CO-OPERATIVE WATCHES—THE THIRTEENTH CO-OPERATIVE PARLIAMENT MEET IN LEEDS—TESTIMONY OF A MEMBER OF CONGRESS.

MANY of the leading "wise men" of Leeds no doubt were of opinion that one day co-operation would end in an explosion, but none expected to see it on fire. This year they saw the People's Mill in flames.

On the night of October 10th (1881) the mill was running up to half-past nine. When the workmen left there was no indication of fire. Three-quarters of an hour later flames were observed in the upper part, which spread with such swiftness that they baffled the efforts of those who were earliest on the scene.

Mr. Wood, waterworks superintendent to the Corporation, in Manor Road, rendered *valuable* services, for assistance in a fire has money value. Neighbourly help also came from Messrs. Marshall and Messrs. Emanuel and Son. Employés of the Society were soon on the spot, and made heroic efforts to subdue the fire. Had it been their own private property they could not have worked harder and with a better will. It was the opinion of many there at the commencement, and well able to judge, that if the fire brigade men had not interfered with the Society's men, who had pipes fixed, and were playing well upon the fire, it would not have reached half the dimensions it did. As soon as the town's firemen arrived they at once ordered the mill men to cease playing, and leave the place, yet they knew best where the most dangerous part of the fire was. One man was actually inside the mill with a hose, pouring volumes of water upon the fire, and getting the mastery of it. The men refused to leave their vantage ground. To compel them to do so the town firemen turned off the water, unfixed the mill pipes, and put theirs on. Thus fifteen to twenty minutes were lost. In the meantime the fire rapidly spread, causing a large and needless destruction of property. The town firemen could have fixed their pipes to other plugs in the vicinity. These firemen acted as though they were grocers. When called to a fire with which nobody has the means of dealing, they properly take command of the premises, but where machinery for extinguishing the fire is already in operation, and in the hands of workmen who best know where the fire is fed, it is silly to supersede them, and the fire superintendent should have been so instructed, if he had no judgment himself. His business was to assist, not frustrate assistance. The Fire Insurance Office should have brought an action against that pedantic red-tape superintendent for damages.

The destroyed building was five storeys high, about 50 yards in length, and 35 in breadth. The basement was occupied by three boilers and 22 pairs of stones, none of which were damaged except from the water. The fire was first noticed in the top storey near the "stive" room—a compartment into which the hot air from the stones is carried. There is usually an accumulation of dust in it, and the fire was probably caused by spontaneous combustion. Such a room is always dangerous, and it was an oversight that it was not made fireproof.

The Co-operative Insurance Company, in which the mill was insured, met with promptness and fairness the claims arising out of the fire. They paid for stock, £4,000; for machinery, £3,000; for freehold, £1,500; and all expenses connected with the putting out of the fire.

Stables and other old buildings were pulled down, and a large fireproof warehouse erected in the yard adjoining the mill for the purpose of storing grain. It was thought better, after buying grain, to have it upon premises under control, rather than let it lie at railway stations or in the warehouses of the vendors.

No one has a better right to be pictorially associated with the fortunes of the famous People's Mill than Mr. George Hyde, who entered the service of the Society as a miller in 1852. He has now (1897) shared all the vicissitudes and triumphs of flour manufacture during 45 years, and is still in the employ of the Society, which he has served so long with fidelity and zeal. There is an aspect of business integrity in his face, and the expression is that of a man who means things to be done. Since the days when corn grinders were the subject of song, the public have had a conception of what a miller is like. That appearance has never been defined, but Mr. Hyde looks it.

In the process of flour manufacture, the corn is elevated 1,600 feet and wormed 566 feet during its various journeys to and from the cleaning machines, before it finally reaches the grinding stage, after which the flour and offals are elevated 2,626 feet and wormed 575 feet before being finally deposited into the various sacks for sale. There are 546 feet of spouting for corn, and 2,582 feet for flour and offals. And to drive the shafting and various machines no less than 8,321 feet of belting is required.

The directors were overwhelmed with duties in addition to their ordinary work. They had to meet nightly to determine upon new buildings and machinery. The mill manager, Mr. Maynard, visited various corn mills where special machinery was at work. Finally the roller system was chosen in place of the eleven pairs of stones previously used. The Board resolved to have the best arranged corn mill in the country.

Previous to the fire at the mill there had not been any fixed

rules or regulations for the employés, as to the time of commencing and leaving work. New rules were printed and hung up in the time-house and the various workrooms. To the honour of the employés the rules are faithfully observed.



GEORGE HYDE.

(*See page 113.*)

The fire interrupted, but did not deter, the Society from progressive steps. Mr. Swale brought forward the advantage of buying certain plots of land in Duncan Street, which the

Corporation were offering for sale. Everyone agreed that it was desirable to have a good position in the central part of the town, but the opportunity, for reasons which seemed good at the time, was let pass. Mr. Tunstall having bought several of the plots offered the Society as many as they required, for £11,250, deemed favourable terms. Mr. Campbell moved that it was "undesirable" to make such purchase. The chance came no more.

A considerable plot of land at Carlton Hill having been unoccupied for several years, three houses were built upon it at the cost of about £350 each. Two were soon sold, and one was kept for the use of the Society. Ten other houses were afterwards erected upon the remaining portions of the land, which soon found purchasers. Thus one part of the business of the Society became dealing in houses. Land was bought and built upon, and if members did not require the houses they were sold to those who did.

A report was received from the committee appointed to consider the question of buying from the Manchester Wholesale instead of buying from private firms outside the movement. The committee found that the Society could buy with advantage from Manchester. The report was signed by Thomas Wilberforce, J. H. Richardson, Samuel Hargreave, James Swale, Isaac Earnshaw, Richard Tabbern, John Teasdill, Henry Maundrill, and William Bell, president. The question was referred to a special general meeting of members by a quarterly meeting majority of six.

A further, and what is called in the House of Commons a "full dress," debate again took place in the Philosophical Hall. Mr. William Swallow moved, "That the Society join the Wholesale at Manchester." Mr. William Baxter seconded the proposal in a cogent speech, observing that if they took this step many smaller societies would follow in the track of the great Society at Leeds. This was the first time the term "great society" was employed at home. At the end of a late discussion the motion was lost. Managers of societies as a rule prefer to buy themselves. The problem is how to unite integrity with interest and afford guarantees to the purchasers of the genuineness of the articles placed before them.

An attempt was made to re-commence what had been declared to be "inopportune," the meat business, in the Kirkstall

district. Arrangements were made with the butchers in the district to supply the members, half bonus being allowed to purchasers. But the experiment did not last long.

Hitherto, the Building Department belonging to the Society (no other society save the Wholesale has a permanent building department) had been under two managers, one for the mason and one for the carpenter work. At length it was found not to work satisfactorily, and Mr. Teasdill was selected to take the control of both departments. By his assiduity and professional knowledge he was considered to have saved the Society hundreds of pounds.

The Chief Constable of Halifax sent word to the directors that he had a man in custody for forging large quantities of metallic checks for defrauding co-operative societies, Leeds included. The Recorder sentenced him to fifteen months' imprisonment. As the case was bad, the Recorder ordered extra costs to the prosecutors. The die-maker was strongly censured for making dies without ascertaining that they were for lawful use.

A block of cottages and a shop were purchased in Hunslet Carr. The shop was converted into a store. A new store was opened in Cardigan Fields, and one in Tong Road, called Strawberry House, making the number of stores at that time fifty-three. Out of the half year's profits £25 was voted for repairs and for replenishing the Library. Not much, certainly, but it showed some increasing interest in education.

The new Bakery was opened with the new patent ovens, which gave satisfaction. Great credit was given to Mr. Smith, the manager, and to his staff for the excellent products they made. The reader will see in some of these pages that the workmen are associated with the manager in the credit accorded. This was quite a new thing when co-operators set the excellent example of recognising the value of those who did the work, as well as of those who devised and directed it.

The directors were again inundated with money. "Inundated" was the term used to describe this new distress. No other movement among the working people than that of co-operation was ever "inundated" in this way. Two directors, Mr. Teasdill and Mr. Swale, Mr. Fawcett, general secretary, with Mr. Tabbern, board clerk, were appointed to invest £5,000 in Leeds Corporation Bonds, which was done

without any expense to the Society. Had a stock or share broker been employed, his commission would have been nearly £50.

It shows advantage of the exhibitions of the productions of co-operative workshops, that in consequence of Mr. Shufflebotham's excellent display of Coventry watches at the Congress this year a club of forty-four members was formed, and owing to Mr. J. M. Wilkinson's friendly activity £439 were paid to the Coventry Society in three years.

Mention was made in the report of President Bell of the usefulness of the reading-rooms established in Boar Lane. The average attendance had been good, excellent papers had been read, and profitable discussions had taken place.

The 13th Annual Co-operative Congress met in Leeds this year—a memorable Congress in many ways, as we have said. Delegates and visitors were alike delighted with the brightness and opulence of their entertainment. Important business was done notwithstanding. The present writer, giving his impressions at the time, said of the Leeds Society one cannot say everything at once. The pens supplied by it for the use of delegates were broad nibs. This has never been the case at previous Congresses. The pens have always been fine points. But in Leeds we did not require to put a "fine point" on anything. The great Society makes a broad, clear mark in co-operative progress. Each delegate was supplied with an "Illustrated Handbook," with a large map kept clear of detail and showing well the numerous co-operative stations within it. The engravings in the handbook were interesting, as was also the literary and business information it contained.

The Society is remarkable for vicissitudes and victories. Many delegates, as well as visitors and strangers, were astonished to find that the mighty Leeds Society has upwards of fifty branches. The large map they presented to us would not show them all. Leeds is the "lion" society of co-operation in numbers and members. What a splendid field to work in! It may become the model society in all things—educational and "profit-sharing" for instance. What can give so vivid an idea of the superb energy of Leeds as the fact that they are permanently engaged in branch building? They have a considerable staff of workmen so employed, namely seventeen joiners and thirty-five bricklayers.

1882.

THE MONTHLY RECORD—IDLE CAPITAL IN AN ACTIVE STORE—PROFITABLE SUGGESTIVENESS—DRAPERY AND CLOTHING CLUBS DEVISED—RAPIDITY OF RESTORATION—FRIENDLY MILLERS—A SPLENDID PROCESSION—CAREER OF A DRAYMAN—EFFECT OF THE DEMONSTRATION—PARTICIPATION WITH INDUSTRY STILL IN THE AIR.

THE *Monthly Record* of the Society, edited by Mr. J. W. Fawcett (begun 1878), has now become an established official organ of the Society. Further mention of it appears elsewhere. Its continuous issue is evidence of the tireless energy of the general secretary.

The corner stone of the Rothwell Store was laid by Mr. J. W. Fawcett, when the members presented him with a gold watch and guard, and Mrs. Fawcett with a handsome gold brooch, as tokens of regard.

Mr. Fawcett notified to the directors that more than £31,000 had been unproductive for the last six months, viz., land at Rothwell, £430; land at Carlton Hill, £600; money paid on the new grain warehouse, £11,033 (exclusive of the old mill land, £2,000); paid on account of new machinery, £8,543; investments in Carlton Iron Company, £2,000; Leeds Woollen Cloth Company, £2,000; Heckmondwike Manufacturing Company, £2,200. These facts received attention. Twenty-nine applications were received and accepted for advances under the building rules, amounting to £4,870. Many were from Yeadon, where a large plot of land had been purchased. Eventually the houses made one of the handsomest terraces in Yeadon.

Mr. Hunn, manager of the coal department, who thought about the business as well as executed it, suggested that it might be profitable to bring the grain from Hull and Goole by boats of the Society instead of by rail. It was decided to alter one of the coal boats into a grain boat, and the boat "Tabbern" was sent to Hull on the 20th February, 1882. She brought back 350 quarters of wheat, which was a great

saving in cost of carriage alone. Then another boat was prepared, and called the "Goodall." Then a new boat was built specially for the carriage of grain. She was called "Baxter." She cost £530, and would carry 500 quarters of wheat, which proved a further saving, and was better accommodation for the mill than it heretofore had. Another instance that thought means gain, which members who oppose educational grants are beginning to understand.

At the suggestion of Mr. L'Amie, the manager of the ready-made outfitting department, the directors were induced to establish drapery and clothing Clubs. By this means the members were enabled to save a considerable amount of money. The payments were 6d. and upwards per week. One club, commenced in March and finished in August, bought to the extent of £1,204. Another, commenced in September and finished in February following, made purchases of £2,470. The total sales to these two clubs were £3,674 in one year. No doubt a large portion of this money would not have been spent with the Society but for these clubs. Another instance showing that thought makes money without hand labour.

All concerned with the work of the Society displayed such energy that the erection of the mill and filling it with the best machinery that money could buy was accomplished within eleven months, and the Society was again grinding its own corn.

Mr. Wilberforce acknowledged that thanks were due to the millers of Leeds for the friendliness with which they offered to supply the Society with flour. Thirty years before, when the main shaft of the mill was broken, the millers would do nothing of the kind.

When completed, the opening of the new mill was celebrated by a demonstration such as had never been seen in Leeds before. A procession took place of all the horses, carts, and wagons, fitted up in a picturesque manner, showing the various branches of business the Society was engaged in. One wagon was fitted up as a grocer's shop, with assistants weighing up tea, sugar, and other things. Drapery and outfitting operations were displayed on another wagon. The shoe manufactory was represented by shoemakers at work. The corn mill had two wagons—one filled with corn and sheaves of corn on the top, another with flour. The bakery wagon had men in their

snow-white uniforms in the act of making up bread, and surrounded by huge loaves of plain and spice bread and massive meat pies. The Baildon Brass Band, the Adel Reformatory Brass Band, Handbell Ringers, the Leeds Engineers' Band, the Rothwell Old Band, and the Cleckheaton Victoria Prize Band, making the air resound, accompanied the procession. Good music was heard in the streets, as prizes were won at the Crystal Palace Festival by the Leeds musicians.

The procession visited the mills, stores, and covered all Leeds in its march. A great meeting followed. The speakers announced by placards were His Worship the Mayor (Alderman Tatham), Lloyd Jones, William Nuttall, E. O. Greening, William Bell (late president), and Mr. T. Wilberforce in the chair.

The reader will see adjoining the portrait of Mr. Dumbleton, who entered the Society in 1855, and was one of the first draymen. There is an element of confidence and looking forwardness in his honest face. Yet, when he drove the first co-operative dray, he could not have foreseen this brilliant procession in which he may be said to have been a moving figure. He is still in the employ of the Society as cartman, and has helped to marshal still greater processions.

The effect of the demonstration was to awaken an interest in the people of Leeds, transcending anything the Society had effected before, and a great acquisition of members followed—as many as 1,055 before the end of December. The wealth of the Society, the variety, completeness, and attractiveness of its departments, when brought visibly before the eyes of spectators, impressed many as no arguments could. Refreshments were to be obtained at the Horticultural Gardens, at cocoa-house prices.

The share capital was increased by £8,594 this half year. The turnover and profits grew in proportion.

In response to many applications from members the loan account, which had been closed for some time, was re-opened, and 3 per cent was paid for all moneys so invested.

With a view, it was stated, to introduce the principle of participation in profit among the employés, the Grocery Committee, of which Mr. Swale was a member, passed a resolution to recommend to the Board that 1 per cent of the

net profits be given to the employés of the stores to be divided according to wages paid to each. By this means the least boy in the stores, as in the case at the Woolwich Arsenal Store,



EDWARD DUMBLETON.

(*See page 120.*)

would have an incentive to use his best endeavours to not only be more careful of the goods, but to be more attentive to the customers. But the recommendation was not successful.

1883.

THE LAW OF CIRCUMSPECTION—A TRIBUTE TO MR. TABBERN—SUCCESS OF THE MILL—A NEW KEEL ON THE WATER—THE LEEDS OLD POST OFFICE BOUGHT.

THIS was a year marked by gratitude and growth. A valued servant received graceful recognition, and new proposals were considered with circumspection. By too much hesitation profitable opportunities are let pass, but circumspection is a good rule to follow provided it does not lose sight of action, which alone gives it virtue. Circumspection, when it degenerates into indecision, is mere fastidious foolishness.

A proposal was made to commence a separate Wholesale Society in Leeds. Mr. Maundrill read a paper in favour of it, and Mr. Swale read one in favour of joining the Wholesale Federation. A committee of inquiry was appointed.

The health of Mr. Tabbern unfortunately obliged him to resign his office. An illuminated resolution was presented to him, recording—"That the Board accepted with deep regret and sympathy the resignation of Mr. Richard Tabbern, clerk to the Board, necessitated by failing health. During many years Mr. Tabbern had faithfully served the Society in various capacities as president, director, and clerk to the Board, and the directors record this expression of their appreciation of the value of the services he has rendered, and sincerely hope that by God's good blessing he may be completely restored to health and be a comfort to his wife and family.—(Signed) T. Wilberforce, president, John W. Fawcett, secretary."

The new mill has now been working for twelve months with a general absence of complaints and a largely increased demand for flour, proving the great superiority of the roller method over grinding by stones.

A question was raised as to the legality of making grants to the library, and no vote was made. The directors took legal advice, which justified them in making grants in the future.

The share capital at the end of June, 1883, had increased more than £11,500, and then stood at more than £203,000, and the net profits amounted to £22,746.

With a view of extending the carrying trade, a large new keel has been purchased for £530. All the grain from Hull and Goole is now being brought in the Society's boats.

Fourteen applications for money, under the building rules, and one for a mortgage, amounting together to £4,441, were granted.

The five through houses erected at Carlton Hill have been all sold to members, and five more, filling up the vacant land there, are being proceeded with.

The glory of the year was an ambitious purchase made by the Board, which showed enterprise and judgment. Further premises being required in Albion Street, and Messrs. Conyers, the owners, agreeing to accept £7,000 for their premises, the old buildings were soon taken down, and the noble pile erected which now stands on the spot.

The corner stone was laid by the president (Mr. T. Wilberforce). A tea and public meeting in the Albert Hall celebrated the event, when Mr. Wilberforce was presented with a framed portrait, in oils, of himself, a gold watch, an albert guard, and a timepiece and bronze ornaments.

Thus briefly the chief events of the year may be told, but their significance is beyond the cursory reader's estimate.

1884.

COST OF THE CENTRAL STORES—THE "CO-OPERATIVE TRAVELLER ABROAD"—DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW BUILDING—ITS FAIRY SCENE AT NIGHT—THE LOCOMOTIVE ON ITS MARCH—DISCUSSIONS ON THE SKY LINE—THEN AND NOW—THE OLDHAM EXAMPLE—PURCHASE OF THE VICTORIA BRIDGE COAL WHARF—SCENES ON THE RIVER AND ON THE BANK—HOW PROFITS ARE APPROPRIATED.

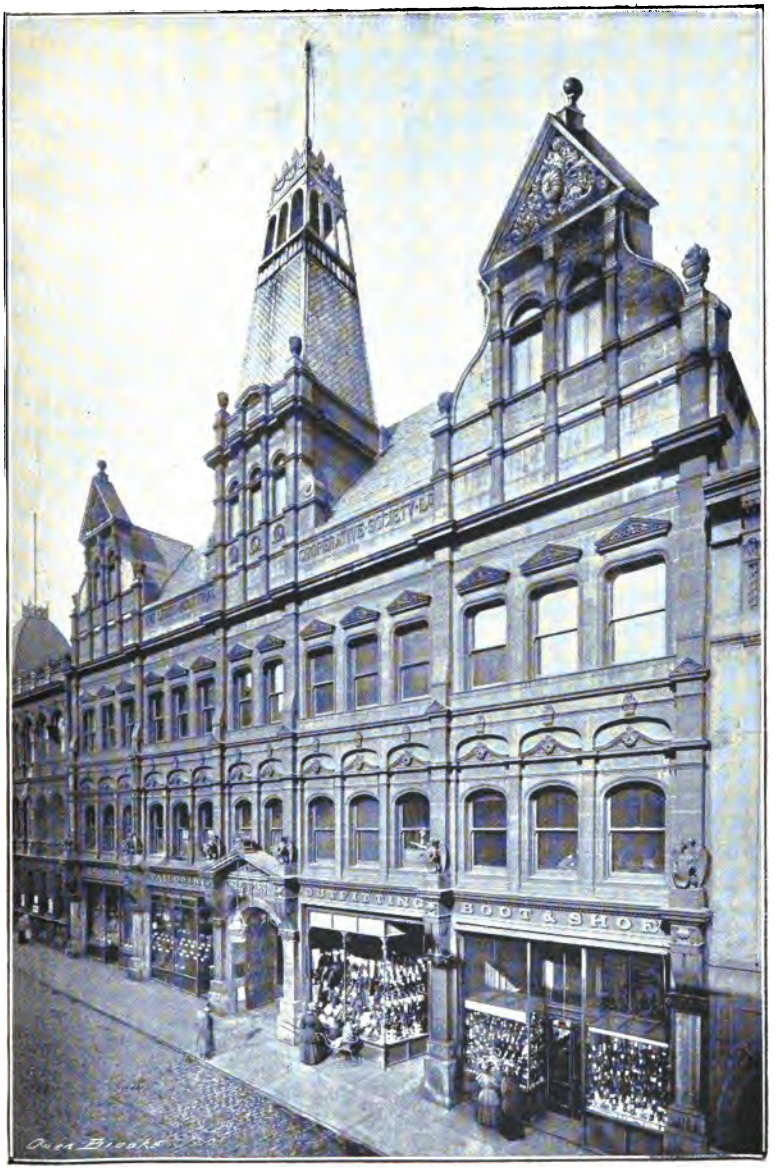
STEPS of pride and importance enliven this year. Central stores with an arcade entrance were opened in Albion Street, an excellent mid-town position. The architect of the building was Mr. J. W. Connon, of Leeds, and the principal contractor Mr. John Schofield, of Dewsbury. All the interior

fixtures and woodwork were done by the Society's own carpenters. The cost of the building (including the original site of Messrs. Conyers' warehouse), formerly the old post office, has been £27,000, most of which has already been paid. The additional cost of fixtures and internal fittings, £3,500, make a total of £30,500. Not long after the completion and occupation of the building it was visited by the "Co-operative Traveller Abroad," Mr. E. O. Greening, than whom no better traveller of that description has been seen about. His impressions present a vivid picture of the Leeds Society at this time worthy of condensation and citation. He regarded the career of the Leeds Society as the best example in the co-operative movement of systematic and persevering propagandism, inspired by the conviction that co-operation is something more. than a business—it is a great cause.

The leaders in Leeds, he says, set themselves to make converts. Wherever a district has been marked out for the practical work of a branch store, meeting after meeting has been held to make the working people of the locality understand the meaning and the importance to them of the proposed step. Many of the directors of the Society have given up their Saturday afternoon and evenings to this work.

The "traveller" saw, with admiration, the triumph of this devotion in the noble pile of buildings in Albion Street, with departments so opulent, and rooms so numerous, that it is like going over a fashionable township. "The glory of the Central Store is a palatial room bearing the appropriate name of the 'People's Hall,' where lectures and concerts are given, and public meetings held. As the visitor passes the lofty entrance and up the broad staircase, the stores, on each side of him, filled with goods attractively displayed, are crowded with customers in front of the counters, and with busy employés behind. If it is evening, the place is bright with light in every corner, and has almost the appearance of an elegant market, or continental fair, so gay is the scene. Some idea of the trade may be formed from the fact that nearly £20,000 worth of drapery and £10,000 worth of boots and shoes are sold over the counters in the course of the year, besides the grocery sales.

"Besides the busy shops on the ground floor and the great hall crowning the building, there are spacious and convenient offices, and an excellent reading-room which is also used for



[*Owen Brooks, Leeds.*]

CENTRAL PREMISES, ALBION STREET (EAST SIDE).

lectures, discussions, and entertainments, which are not expected to draw audiences large enough for the People's Hall. This is a wise arrangement, for meetings which in a moderate-sized room would be counted successful are converted into dismal failures by being held in a hall five times too big for the occasion."

No figures tell like the realities which the figures represent. "Here," says the traveller, "in a yard under a covered shed is a great traction engine employed to take out flour to outlying branches about the town. This mighty road locomotive is loaded up every morning with ten tons of precious human food, and steams away along the roads which wind over hill and dale around Leeds, depositing at each branch the quantity required for the consumption of the members who live in the neighbourhood."

Discussions were raised on the character of the buildings in Albion Street. Some demurred to the wisdom and some to the expense of an attractive sky line to the building. But what pride would there be in pointing to the Central Stores if the roof was as tame and flat as the bonnet of a quakeress was a few years ago. It was conjectured by some that the architect increases the expense in advertising his own taste. It may as well be said that Christopher Wren made St. Paul's Cathedral the pride of the Metropolis—to advertise himself. An architect of genius endows the town with reputation where his buildings stand, and endows those who cause them to be erected with a reputation for taste.

If realities give vividness to figures, pictures give vividness to descriptions which the reader will find to be true, if he looks at the annexed delineation of the Central Stores, Albion Street, East side, opened July 19th, 1884. It is a picturesque pile, which is saying a great deal, and its solidity and grace enrich the architecture of the town.

The progress by this time became so apparent to the members that a comparison was made between the condition of affairs eleven years ago and now.

Then (1873), the members numbered 9,071, the share capital was £49,649, the turnover for the year £182,474, and the net profit £14,778. The value of freeholds was £29,129, and the Society had only eleven branches.

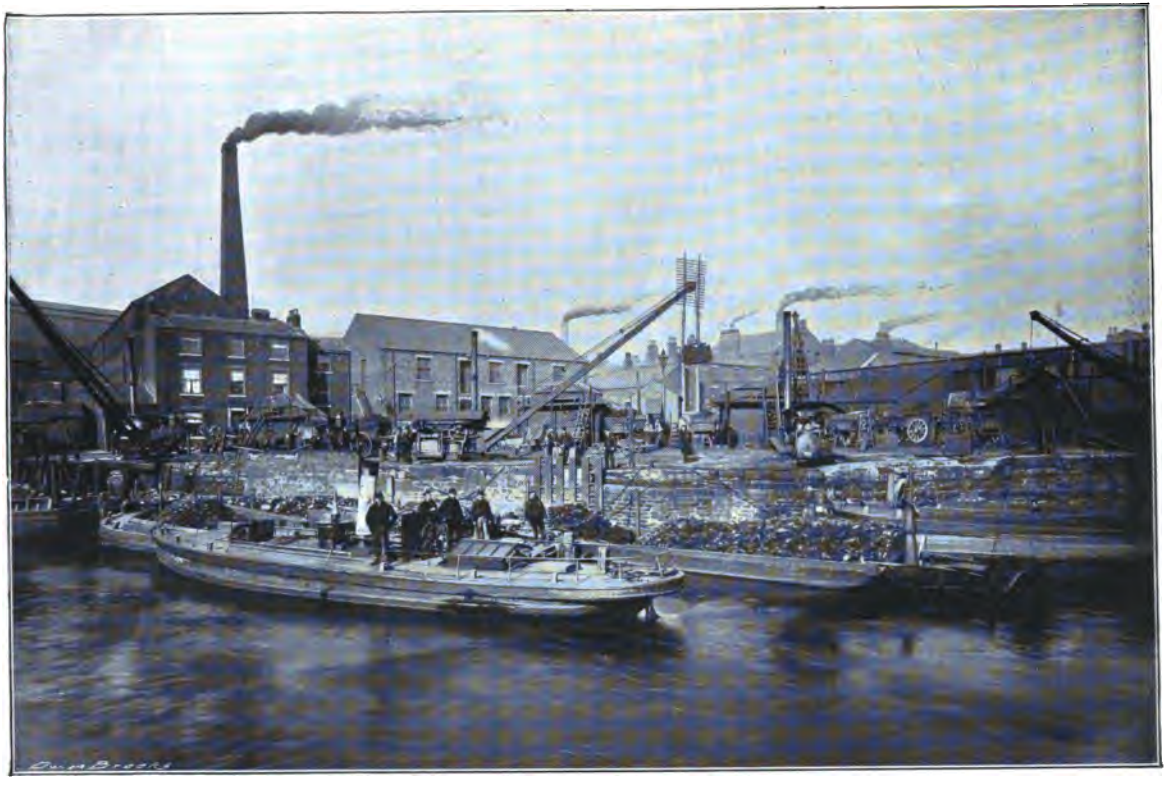
Now, the number of members is 20,895, and the share

capital £217,940. The turnover for the twelve months ending the 30th of June last was £498,578, far more than double what it was in 1873. The net profit for the twelve months preceding June 30th was £55,832. In the same period the Society paid as interest upon capital (to members) no less than £10,471. The present total value of the Society's freeholds is £118,885, against £29,129 in 1873; and the value of fixed stock, machinery, &c., is £31,201.

In 1884 the two societies in Oldham spent together no less a sum than £2,600 on reading-rooms, libraries, lecture classes, and concerts, for the benefit and pleasure of the members. These facts were brought forward to show that Leeds should not lag behind Oldham.

Report was made that the boot factory in Marshall Street is being enlarged by the appropriation of the old People's Hall, and that the directors have bought the coal wharf at Victoria Bridge for £10,000, which gives them a valuable property in the centre of the town.

Of all possessions of man the most delightful are land and water, with vessels about—more picturesque than mountain or valley, and more serviceable, since water will carry you far elsewhere which valley and mountain will not. Though the adjacent representation is but a coal wharf, it has pictorial qualities. The boat is probably the "Tabbern" or the "Baxter." The man standing so jauntily on the side of the deck is probably some Nansen in the service of the Society, who explores Hull and Goole in the interests of the corn mill. There is a barge lying by whose destination is somewhere in the regions of coal. There is life and stir all about the wharf. The tall chimney sends up a cheer of smoke, its only mode of expressing its satisfaction at being in the picture. Surveying the scene are substantial, well-managed offices, as I thought when recently there. There are fourteen boats in possession of the Society, each carrying eighty tons, besides three grain boats. The Society has sixteen horses, and in winter it has to hire twenty more, which are probably "boarded out," as the Society has no home accommodation for them. The coal department includes twelve railway depôts, five on the Midland and six on the Great Northern Railways, and one at Burley-in-Wharfedale. Seventy railway wagons are employed in carrying coal to the various depôts. The opulence of the



COAL WHARF, VICTORIA BRIDGE. [Owen Brooks, Leeds.]

Society may be seen in many places, its outlying activity is nowhere more striking than on the bank of the river Aire at the Victoria Wharf.

With a view to keep the number of members on the books correct, 2,655 persons' names were crossed off. That number had been accumulating for many years, because they had not complied with the rules of the Society, which require a member to purchase to the amount of £8 a year, and the payment, within three years, of the shares required to be held by him.

A further increase is mentioned in the June report of 647 members, bringing the present number up to 20,895. The sales for this half year have been £246,859, showing an increase of £11,794 over the corresponding half of last year. The net profit is £28,557 after paying interest on capital, providing for the reserve fund, and depreciation of property and stock, as is usual in co-operative societies.

The manner in which the profits (£28,557) were disposed shows the general method pursued by the Society:—

	£	s.	d.
Dividend on flour claims, 33,070 bags, at 2s. 6d. per bag	4,133	15	0
Dividend on other purchase claims, £171,560, at 2s. 6d. per £	21,445	0	0
Depreciation of freeholds, at the rate of 1¼ per cent	1,486	1	3
Balance to be carried to reserve fund	1,492	18	1

Thus every member could see the profits were wisely appropriated.

1885.

ACTIVITY OF THE FUNDLESS EDUCATIONAL COMMITTEE—CO-OPERATION AMONG CREATURES OF LAND, WATER, AND AIR—THE LONG-LOOKED-FOR MOTION—MR. FAWCETT'S CALCULATIONS—EXTENSION OF DEPRECIATION—NO FALLING OFF IN PROFITS.

THIS year opens with hope that a long contested question affecting the progress and repute of the Society is nearing settlement.

The Educational Committee, not only fundless, but in debt, make ceaseless efforts for the advantage of the Society, and have arranged for lectures in connection with the Yorkshire College, free to members and the public alike, by which the Society contributes to the information of the inhabitants of the town and people in the street, who are neither members nor purchasers. The first course was given by Professor Miall, on "Co-operation and Competition among Animals." Prince Kropotkin has since shown that co-operators have much to learn from the animal and insect world. The ants take lessons, the seals are educated, sparrows receive flying lessons, crows study military tactics—co-operators have plenty of examples of the wisdom of acquiring knowledge, not of the schools otherwise provided, but mainly co-operative knowledge necessary for the store and the workshop.

At a meeting on the 7th of October, 1885, for the revision of the Society's rules, the chairman, Mr. T. Wilberforce, formally moved clause 123 for the setting apart of "a sum not exceeding 1¼ per cent of the net profits for an Educational Fund for promoting instruction and culture." Mr. Swallow seconded the motion on the ground that those societies having an Educational Fund were the most prosperous. Mr. Fawcett, the secretary, said that independently of the £100 granted by the members to the Educational Committee, the expenses for the last twelve months in connection with the reading-room and the loss on the *Co-operative News* amounted to £340, the loss in connection with tea meetings would be about £100, cost of *Record* about £50, and grant to Central Board, £60,

making altogether an annual charge of about £550. The net profits of the Society for the past twelve months, after deducting the amount set apart for the depreciation of freeholds, was about £55,000, which at 1¼ per cent would give a sum equal to about £700 per annum for educational purposes.

It is an advantage to have a secretary ready-handed and ready-minded, who can tell a meeting in a minute all the relevant facts which should be in its mind. Mr. Fawcett certainly proved that it was time the Society had a permanent Intelligence Fund unless the Leeds Society intended to take a back seat among English stores. The clause was adopted as one of the proposed rules, afterwards to be ratified or rejected. It will be a new thing to find it ratified after so many rejections.

The following table is quoted because it shows the extension of depreciation of investments, and illustrates the constant vigilance and business sagacity characteristic of the affairs of the Society from year to year.

	£	s.	d.
In payment of a dividend on checks sent in for flour, 36,030 bags at 2s.	3,603	0	0
In payment of a dividend on checks sent in for other purchases, £190,860 at 2s. 4d.	22,267	0	0
In the depreciation of the Society's freehold property at the rate of 1¼ per cent.	1,804	17	9
In the depreciation of one of the Society's investments	1,000	0	0
Balance to be carried to the reserve fund	469	12	3

It seemed desirable to create an Insurance Fund for the Society, and the directors recommend that £2,000 be taken from the Reserve Fund as a nucleus thereof, which will enable them to save the premiums on a number of small properties, and one day may enable them to cover their principal risks.

The turnover for the June half year is £250,086, the net profit being £30,170. The turnover for the December half year is £245,248, the profit being £29,144.

1886.

NO SUN OF FREEDOM SHINES ON IGNORANCE—AN EDUCATIONAL LEVY CARRIED AT LAST—THE CONTEST OF THE FRACTIONS—THE LOWEST ADOPTED—MR. HERBERT SPENCER'S JUDGMENT—AN IGNORANT SON FETCHES LESS PER LB. THAN ONE EDUCATED—INTELLIGENCE A PAYING INVESTMENT—MEAT SALES RE-COMMENCED—ALL SORTS OF PROGRESS BEING MADE IN THIS TRIUMPHANT YEAR.

CONDORCET has told us that "Under the freest constitution the ignorant are always slaves." The majority of the Leeds Society have now resolved to end this risk.

On the 31st of May, 1886, Mr. Wilberforce, president, in the chair, at a special meeting for the revision of rules, Mr. J. Robinson moved that the amount to be allowed for educational purposes be ¾ per cent of the net profits instead of 1¼ per cent as proposed. The *Record* says that "much to the surprise of the educationalists this motion was carried." Whether they were surprised at the smallness of the amount or surprised that any amount was carried was not stated. Subsequently Mr. H. C. Hammond moved another amendment that 2½ per cent of the net profits be so appropriated. This was negatived and the ¾ per cent adopted.

It was a bold proposal, that the members should adopt the Rochdale rule, which made the fortune and reputation of the weaver pioneers, who permanently allotted 2½ per cent for the promotion of intelligence among the members. Probably the ¾ per cent was made from a prudent forecast that that was as much as could be carried. Considering what had gone before it was a great thing to get ¾ per cent put into the laws. It raised education from a charity to a right. Education is not contagious. It cannot be caught, it has to be taught. Intelligence is a plant that grows only in cultivated ground.

Mr. Herbert Spencer has put it on record in his great work on Sociology that "Co-operation can only succeed according to the measure of the intelligence and moral qualities of those who attempt to carry it out." Co-operation will never go

forward without wisdom among its members. There is no emancipation without knowledge. Progress depends on good seeing, and good seeing depends on the education of the eye. Education is not only a necessity for members, it is the indispensable policy of a co-operative society.

It is singular that even an ignorant man cannot see that if the son of a workman and the son of a master were weighed in the scales, the son of the master would fetch more per lb., avoirdupois weight, than the son of a workman, simply because the faculties of the gentleman's son are trained and ready for use, and have the power of use, while the faculties of the workman's son have had no training, no development, and no capacity to advance his own interests, except in the form of hired labour—for somebody else's advantage and not his own. Every co-operative society would be twice as rich as it is, were its members twice as wise as they are. Co-operators make many investments, but no investment pays them so large or so sure a dividend as investments in intelligence. No society which begun with provision for education in its rules ever turned back to ignorance, nor has any society that began without such a rule ever made one afterwards. The Leeds Society is now the splendid exception. Intelligence no longer lives on dole votes.

The provision for intelligence did not arrest the progress of the Society, which went on with increasing momentum. The sales for the June half year reached £240,504, and the net profits £27,228. In the December half year the sales were £240,716, and the profits £27,509. The Society went on buying land sacred and profane. One of its plots formed part of the Vicarage Estate, Hunslet. On one or more of the Society's estates a handsome chapel has been erected on land bought from the Society. In June, it is announced that, after the lapse of many years, a commencement has once more been made in the meat business, though "the season of the year is most inopportune."

The December report states that the Meat sales have been £7,685, leaving a profit of £740, which, considering the short period of sales, was considered promising. Ten branches had already been opened, and others were contemplated.

In October (1879) it is said "at last, after many years looking out, the directors have secured a suitable site for a

store at Stanningley." If it took "many years" looking out for a single site, how many years must have been expended in looking for all the sites now occupied. But in later years if the directors did not find a site they bought an estate and made one.

1887.

A YEAR OF LIGHT—TWO TEMPLES—THE STORES MANAGER SUCCEEDS—A PERILOUS INVESTMENT REJECTED—A GOLDEN ITEM IN THE BALANCE SHEET—FORTY YEARS IN THE WILDERNESS—A SPLENDID RETROSPECT.

LAST year was the year of triumph. This, the 40th year of the Society's existence, is the first year of assured light, as the reader will see a new item in the chronicle of the appropriation of profits. Leeds has left its back seat among the societies vacant, and now sits proudly in the front. Some members write in the *Record* of a "Temple erected to the worship of bonus"—a mean place would be sufficent for that if such a temple had no devotees who looked higher. A temple for the worship of principle, in which honesty is first and dividend second, could not be too chaste or too beautiful, like some of the Roman temples which were an inspiration when erected, and which people still gladly go across the world to see.

Mr. J. Dockray, president, at the quarterly meeting of the Society, brought forward facts to show the advantage of a stores manager, as various economies and reforms had thereby been effected. Further, about 400 volumes, mostly standard works, had been purchased from the Chapel Allerton Society and added to the library.

This year the directors rather submitted than recommended a proposal to invest £2,000 in the Manchester Ship Canal. They put the question on the sensible ground that the magnitude of the scheme gave it an aspect of national

importance. Mr. J. Dockray, the president, and Mr. James Swale reported the views of the directors, in speeches of moderation and good sense. They thought the Canal might benefit the trade of Leeds and South Yorkshire. Mr. Tabbern and Mr. W. Lishman supported an amendment which affirmed that the "time was inopportune," which was carried by 74 votes to 65. The relevant and consistent opinion was expressed that, "as the Canal was a commercial speculation, if the Society made further investments they should be in co-operative concerns." Mr. Tetley, Mr. Campbell, and others were against the investment, and the motion was rejected.

It nowhere appears that when any investment is proposed members are asked to consider whether they are willing to lose the money if the concern turned out ill. If such consideration were presented, those who elected to run the risk would prove that they supported the project in a generous spirit. There would be no looking back then and no squealing if the money should be lost, which had been honourably risked with open eyes.

A new check system commenced on June 13th, and was found to promise well. The meat department made sales in the June period of £13,375, and a profit of £1,085.

In the December half year a grant was made to the Dewsbury Congress Fund of £50. In the distribution of profits (£31,141) in the June half there is a new item seen for the first time—"Educational purposes as per rule," £233. 11s. 1d. The very fractions of so wholesome an item (usually omitted in this narrative) deserve to be recorded here. The very penny is precious considering its uses.

In the 81st half-yearly balance sheet for December the profits were declared to be £32,835, of which £246. 5s. 4d. was accorded for educational purposes, making a total of £479. 16s. 5d.

"Forty years" is a favourite period in the Leeds mind. The Benyon Mill men had it. Now the Society has walked forty years in the wilderness where no manna of knowledge is, save in tardy doles. How is it, the reader may ask, that members of the Society are not more prompt to sustain the co-operative ideal? However admirably the leaders may desire to advance it, they can go no further than the majority of the Society will permit them. Even the greatest general—whether Napoleon,

Wellington, or Wolseley—cannot advance more quickly than their commissariat can keep up with them. The provisions of an army must always accompany it. Now the votes of members in meeting assembled are the commissariat, without which no directors, however able, can adopt measures which the honour of the cause and the interest of the Society require. This is why a fixed provision of an Intelligence Fund (otherwise called an "Educational Fund") is an essential to great co-operative progress.

This year was published in the *Record* the position of the Society as per annual return made to the Registrar, and its business and gains during forty years.

Number of members	24,596
	£
Share capital	254,875
Loan capital	16,148
Reserves	10,200
Value of land, buildings, and fixed stock	196,435
Value of goods sold for 1887	526,107
Net profit, after allowing £10,075 for interest upon capital, and £8,023 for depreciation of fixed stock and property	63,977
Total turnover of the Society from its commencement	8,095,669
Total profit from its commencement	684,760

This is a splendid record of what has been accomplished by union, good sense, and pertinacity.

1888.

THE DAWN VISIBLE NOW—LEEDS FAR AHEAD OF ROCHDALE—DEATH OF MR. TEASDILL—PRESENTATION TO MR. PRENTIS—STORY OF HEBDEN BRIDGE—CAPITAL TO SPARE—AMENITIES TO LABOUR—GOOD RESULTS ALL ROUND.

ABOUT this time Mr. Sam Bamford delivered an elucidatory lecture in the People's Hall on the Two Schools in co-operation, and said the "full dawn of a brighter day was coming up the steep of time." A pretty figure of speech. The Leeds Society has begun to see that dawn.

Continuity of years bring an era of comparison. In the race of progress, Leeds has outrun Rochdale now.

In 1867 the turnover of the Rochdale Society was £233,944, while the Leeds turnover in 1866 was £85,068. The comparison was against Leeds then. In 1886 the Rochdale Society did a business of £246,000, while the Leeds Society did one of £480,000, or £220,000 ahead of Rochdale. In all the earlier years of the Society the progress of Rochdale was of the nature of an inspiration to be imitated, if possible. No one imagined then the day would come when Leeds would surpass it in this striking way.

The regretted death of Mr. John Teasdill is recorded (manager of the building department), whose devotion to the work and interest of the Society rendered him a valuable servant.

The directors have decided to abolish the quarterly stocktaking in flour, grocery, and bakery departments, as the objects for which these stocktakings were instituted could be obtained by less laborious but equally effectual means. Leeds excels in business devices. This last would be of service in some societies which do not always know exactly where they are when they have taken stock.

Mr. Fawcett and Mr. Whalley presented to Mr. J. Prentis, on behalf of the employés, a purse of £30 in gold. Mr. Prentis had then reached his 79th year. There could be no doubt of the genuine regard entertained for Mr. Prentis, and the presentation was a timely spontaneous and graceful gift.

Mr. Joseph Greenwood came Leeds way and delivered before the members the romantic history of Hebden Bridge Fustian Society, quite as strange and inspiring as the story of Rochdale. Leeds has always lent a willing ear to narratives of self-helping progress, and in the annals of co-operative workshops, Hebden Bridge stands first in England.

On the question of joining the Wholesale, which was again discussed, it was urged that some financial consideration had to be taken into account, since, owing to the dimensions of the Society, it involved the locking up of £12,000. When the debate came on it was said that the £12,000 invested would bring 5 per cent, while the Society had large sums at the bank at 2½ per cent. But if anything went wrong they would be liable for the loss of £12,000. The motion to join the Wholesale was defeated by a majority of one.

In view of the large amount of surplus capital from the accumulated profits of the half year, the directors have decided to lend money on mortgage security of freehold, cottage, or other approved property, at 4 per cent, repayable at six months' notice.

There occur cordial meetings between employer and employed in Leeds. Some time ago the directors entertained 800. This year 1,100 were gratified with a *soirée*, which only ended at midnight The pleasantest features of co-operation are its amenities to labour.

The meat department showed an increase at the end of June of £5,989 over the corresponding half of last year. Meat seems going up; but, ever fluctuating, it showed at the end of December a decrease in profit of £292, although there is an increase in the sales of £6,737.

Good results have been obtained in the boot factory, 16,720 pairs of boots having been made during the half year. A brush-making business has been commenced, with good prospects of success. Owing to the good business judgment in which new projects are carried out in Leeds they commonly succeed.

Reports published of the attendance of directors show their assiduity. In the December half year of 1888 the president's (Mr. Joseph Dockray) attendance is 96. The attendance of other directors only vary from 51 to 58.

The sales in the June period amounted to £272,470, being an increase of nearly £10,811 over the same period last year.

In the December half year the sales amounted to £287,340, an increase of nearly £23,000 over the same period of last year, the profits for this half year being nearly £37,000. The total sales for the year have been £559,811, and the net profits £71,108. The amount recorded for educational purposes, as per rule, during the June half year is £256; in the December period it is £277, making £533 for the year.

1889

PECULIARITIES OF THE PLUM MIND—NINE ADVANTAGES OF LOCAL CO-OPERATION—COMMENCEMENT OF THE WOMEN'S GUILD IN LEEDS—THEIR NINE BRANCHES—SOCIAL EFFECTS OF PROFIT-SHARING—NEW STORES ARISING IN ALL DIRECTIONS—BUDGET DIFFICULTIES OF THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER OF THE SOCIETY—GOOD ITEMS.

A PLUM has a skin, though very thin, wonderfully strong, which will resist the action of water and many solvents. There are many minds of this description in every city. The plum will resist the knife unless it be quite sharp. So it is with many understandings. They are impervious, except to quick penetrating facts. In this history there are facts of every order of saliency, which, when they shall come under public consideration, there can hardly be any density of mental epiderm which some of them will not penetrate. Now and then it is effective to sum up, in some pointed way, the advantages of a new system of association and business, which any one can verify for himself, and which are open to all the city. Mr. Leach did this in 1889 in a most useful speech. He set forth nine things in which co-operation had benefited the working people of Leeds.

1st. Co-operation in Leeds has made it possible for working men to obtain pure food at fair market prices.

2nd. It has taught the advantages of cash payments over credit.

3rd. It has given working men a knowledge of business they could not otherwise have obtained.

4th. It has enabled them to carry on a trade of £500,000 a year.

5th. It has made them joint proprietors of freehold property amounting to upwards of £170,000.

6th. It has secured them an annual net profit of £70,000.

7th. It has raised many a man's wages two or three shillings a week.

8th. It has relieved more distress than any other social organisation extant.

9th. The Leeds Society has divided among its members, or credited to their account, as share capital, during the last two years, upwards of £128,000.

There is no resisting power in the ordinary plum mind which may not be penetrated by one or other of these nine facts. Amid all the popular associations of the time, it is only a co-operative society which can confer advantages like those enumerated upon its neighbours.

The Women's Guild commenced in Leeds, March, 1889, in consequence of a lecture by Miss Reddish. Until John Stuart Mill's days there was no clear consciousness in the public mind that the best half of the social force of the world was lying practically unused. Women had activity and influence, but they had no civil, political, or social self-assertion, and if they attempted it they were offensively rebuked. Co-operation was always just to them, and gave wives property before the law conceded it. Yet it was not until after forty years of co-operation that it occurred to the Society that the enthusiasm and wit, in which Leeds women excel, was an available force on the side of social progress. In a board school half the pupils are girls, and no one can look after their interests like women. Men have neither the delicacy, the discernment, nor the knowledge necessary. In a co-operative society, where half the members are women, the same thing is true. Reports now constantly appear of the proceedings of the Women's Guild, and reports of their visits to various stores, which they assist by their wisdom, extend by their enthusiasm, and enliven by their songs and recitations. The branches of the

Women's Guild in Leeds have only grown to nine. The stores with which they are connected deserve to be enumerated. They are Albion Street, Bramley, Delph Lane, Farnley, Hunslet, Newtown, Rothwell, Stourton, and Bank. The number of Guild members to be recorded in 1897 will be 250.

The Educational Committee put down profit-sharing as one of the subjects it suggested for discussion. Mr. Fawcett, speaking at Rothwell, said: "Co-operation rested on the conviction that labour did not receive a fair and equitable share of what it was so instrumental in producing. Co-operation sought by justifiable means to bring about a better state of things, teaching working men how to acquire capital for themselves, to conduct large businesses, and thereby participate in the profits of trade."

Additional branches have been opened at Bramley and Whingate Road for the sale of meat. There are prospects now of making this reluctant and intermittent department prosperous and permanent, since land for an abattoir has been purchased in Gelderd Road. Tenders for the principal works required have been let, and the erection of the buildings, including those of a grocery store and meat shop near at hand, are now in progress. A block of cottages has been erected in Linden Street and Linden Avenue, on the Dewsbury Road estate, and plans are being prepared for another block to front into Crossland Terrace. Extensions are the order of the day. Last year was occupied in completing the various erections in hand. Now all is movement again.

The brush sales for the June half of this year are £726. Larger premises are now wanted for the brush factory. At the solicitation of local committees additional premises have been opened and rented at Idle, where the activity of co-operators quite contradict the lazy name of their town.

It appears from this December report that members are reluctant to have their savings returned to them. There is an increase of £2,224 in the Loan Account, some members preferring to transfer their surplus shares to this account instead of withdrawing their money altogether. We find a special meeting has resolved that the maximum amount each member may hold has been reduced to £75—calculated to decrease the share capital by about £18,000. The Chancellor of the Exchequer of the Society was again embarrassed by a

Budget surplus, and having no army or navy in which he could engulf it, he was under the necessity of returning it to the members. Working men never involved themselves in such distressing difficulties before co-operation began.

The items always of cardinal interest in affairs of a store are sales and profit. The sales for the June half year were £314,236, and the profits £36,608. The sales for the December half year (embracing 27 weeks) were £324,986. The profits amount to £41,533. The members now stand at 26,348, an increase for the year of 1,130.

The award for "educational purposes as per rule" in the June half year was £274. 11s. 4d. In the December half year it was £311. 19s. 11d., which make the improving sum of £586 for the year.

1890.

THE ABATTOIR YEAR—THE FOUNDATION STONE LAID—ITS OPENING IN OCTOBER—UNSURPASSED IN COMPLETENESS—ITS AMAZING BUSINESS—A SMALL FIRE AT THE CORN MILL—NEW PREMISES TO BE PURCHASED IN ALBION STREET—NEW ENTERPRISES, NEW ALTERATIONS, AND NEW INVESTMENTS—INDIFFERENCE TO PROSPERITY.

THIS is the year of the Abattoir, not so musical, but a more blessed word than Mesopotamia. True, the oriental term "Mesopotamia" sounds like a charm. But the French word Abattoir saves writing the word of horror, "slaughter-house," which belongs to war. The death of animals is not brought about by malignity, but from a sense of necessity. Once and once only, now eleven years ago, a correspondent of the *Record* signing himself a "Carnivorous Co-operator" (a voracious name) spoke of a "meat business." My scruples, which go farther back, were shared by the "Carnivorous Co-operator."

In February, 1890, Mr. John Leach, one of the directors, laid the corner stone of the abattoir or meat-preparing house



ABATTOIR, GELDERD ROAD.

[*Owen Brooks, Leeds.*]

in the Gelderd Road. Mr. Philemon Rump said the cost, including the site, would probably be £12,000. It was said "it would be a *red* letter day." No doubt it would be for the cattle It had often been predicted that the opening of the meat department would be distinguished by success. This time it has come true. Mr. Leach was presented with a handsome timepiece and a writing desk, and a tea and coffee service were given to Mrs. Leach.

The new abattoir for converting cattle into meat was formally opened for business on October 18th, 1890. Considering how often this trade had been attempted and how swiftly it had failed, it shows pertinacity and pluck to study, during so many years, the conditions of success and then try again when the conditions were mastered.

There is no finer building (though Barnsley has a good one) in all co-operative England than the abattoir of Leeds. Indeed so lofty, so spacious, so clean, so complete and convenient, are all the processes that animals, had they taste and public spirit, might be proud to end their days in such a handsome hall. The reader sees its exterior in the adjoining plate, which shows the extent of the place. If the plate could show the interior it would excite astonishment.

The sales for this year were £65,104. 17s. 9½d., being an increase of £17,894 over the previous twelve months, or an average weekly increase of £344. 2s. 7d. During these twelve months the abattoir dealt with 1,846 beasts weighing 99,915 stones, 4,151 sheep weighing 310,504 lbs., 845 pigs weighing 8,111 stones, besides a large number of lambs and calves. From the pork department there were sent out 109,562 lbs. of sausages, 17,820 lbs. of polony, 20,164 lbs. of potted meat, and 3,972 lbs. of German sausage. A tripe business has been commenced of which about 600 lbs. are sold weekly. At last meat selling is fairly on the march, and during the last half year £3,842 of profit has been realised.

The Leeds Women's Guild make reports denoting their wholesome activity. They have established a class for dress-cutting, two classes for cookery (the teachers being from the Yorkshire School of Cookery), and one for clear starching, by a lady from the same school.

A fire again occurred in the corn mill, by the explosion of one of the exhausts, in September, 1890. The mill was

running at the time, and the fire was suppressed by the Society's own fire brigade. Possibly the town firemen were now better instructed than formerly. However, the mill authorities were shy of trying them.

New purifying machines were put to work in the mill calculated to produce flour of superior colour.

New premises are to be purchased in Albion Street in connection with the extension of the Central Stores. One hundred shares have been purchased under special circumstances in the Heckmondwike Manufacturing Company. Important alterations have been made in the People's Hall with a view to obtain a music license.

Enterprise is now always in the air. Sites for new stores and a number of dwelling-houses have been secured in Roundhay Road and Back Lane, Bramley. A valuable property has also been purchased in Meadow Road for the purpose of effecting much-needed extensions in connection with the building and other departments. Unclaimed shares amounting to £1,047, representing 376 accounts, have been written off and added to the Reserve Fund. Members seem to become rich and not to know it, or not to care about it.

The sales up to June were £338,054, the profits £42,845. We have now reached the eighty-seventh half-yearly report, which is the one for the December period. It gives the sales at £354,381, which show an increase since December of last year of £29,395. The profits available for distribution are £47,510. The award for "educational purposes" was in June £313. The award for December was £350, making £663 for the year. It is pleasant to end a year with this item of good omen.

1891.

THE PLEASANT MONOTONY OF SUCCESS—GOVERNMENT REPORT ON CO-OPERATIVE PROFIT-SHARING — MEADOW ROAD BUILDINGS—THE CRICKET FIELD, CAMP FIELD MILL, AND OTHER PURCHASES—BALANCE SHEETS ENLARGED—AN OLD PROPHET ASTONISHED.

AS our chronicle proceeds the reader will begin to feel a lack of the vivacity of vicissitude. Moralists never cease warning mankind against the satiety of prosperity. But human experience shows there is no satiety men enjoy so much. Our narrative now enters upon the concluding years of the Society's half century, everyone being surcharged by the delightful monotony of success, of which no man or reader ever complains, however much he thinks he loves variety.

New departments or new pursuits appear above ground, gratifying to the social economist just as new flowers delight the eye of the botanical explorer in an unfrequented land. A Field Club is one of the fascinating pursuits of studious and adventurous members.

The Women's Guild comes frequently before the readers of the *Record*, always engaged in some new activity for the service of co-operation. It makes all the difference in the world to the prosperity of a store where women are the discouraging or the encouraging co-operative force in the household.

One exception occurs to the uniformity of good fortune. Owing to failing health Mr. A. Hunn has been obliged to resign the managership of the coal department after 23½ years' service. Mention has been made of his ability and suggestiveness. The Society received his resignation with real regret. Mr. B. Bickerdike, from the office department, was appointed to succeed him.

As participation of profit with those who can greatly contribute to produce it, has often been in the minds of directors and committees, the *Record* quotes an official opinion upon it. In his report to the Board of Trade on "Profit-Sharing," Mr. J. Lowry Whittle says, 'Those employers who have tried it group its advantages under five heads, namely

(1) reduction of waste of material, (2) superior excellence in the work done, (3) diminished expense of superintendence, (4) greater stability in the staff and consequential reduction of risk in commercial enterprises, (5) increase of practical information connected with the business, the workers being stimulated to aid the managing staff with suggestions as to improvements and information as to new processes." We cite this passage on profit-sharing because co-operators have made it from the beginning an integral part of their system.

With a view to find a safe investment for increasing capital, a joiners' workshop is being erected. There is industrial animation of the adjoining scene of the building department in Meadow Road, purchased this year. The hands employed include bricklayers, masons, joiners, plumbers, and labourers to the number of 135. The plate relates to the building department, and presents a clever arrangement of the stores and persons and carrying appliances of the works. The joiners' workshops in another place have every convenience of spaciousness.

A plot of land containing about 14,000 square yards, known as the Cricket Field, Hall Lane, Armley, has been purchased for the erection of block cottages. A site for a store has been bought in Brudenell Grove and property in Church Street, Hunslet. The purchase of Camp Field Mill has been completed, and the mill let to a tenant on a fourteen years' lease. Memorial stones were laid in Elford Grove, Roundhay Road, where ten through houses are being erected, and another stone laid in Elder Road, Bramley.

The balance sheets from 1858 to 1874 were on small octavo sheets. Since 1876 they have occupied large foolscap sheets. They often contain now "Comparisons" of six years of balance sheets showing the varying, increasing, or decreasing amounts if they occur, in some shy laggard department. The general results are ever accelerated advancement. The "comparison" section now referred to shows turnover, profits, share capital, number of members, bags of flour delivered, number of members bringing in checks. A most useful comparative table—thus giving information and inferential suggestions to members.

The profit of the June half year is £50,314, an increase of £8,469 compared with the same period of last year.



Building Department, Meadow Road. [*Owen Brooks, Leeds.*]

As there was £1,000 of undivided profit brought into this half-year's account the amount of profit available for distribution was £51,314; as the Reserve Fund now stands at £17,619, it was thought advisable to transfer £5,000 to the Insurance Fund, through which a considerable amount of the Society's own property is now being insured.

The award to education for the June half year was £377, for the December period £378, making £755, which would perturb certain tumultuous meetings of a former day.

The December report is the 89th laid before members and it shows a profit of £50,489, making a total profit for the year of £100,804, which would astonish even that enthusiastic prophet John Holmes.

1892.

THE LEEDS SHIP AND ITS TONNAGE OF DIVIDENDS—THE FARMING PROBLEM DEBATED — CONDITIONS OF THE LEEDS EDUCATION RATE—PARTICIPATION, A NEW SENSE—THE WHOLESALE, THE TWO SIDES OF THE QUESTION—YEAST AND EGGS COMMENCED TO BE IMPORTED—THE SPIRAL STORE OF ELFORD GROVE—PLEASANT CAPRICES OF PROFIT.

A SMALL leak will sink a great ship—a maxim well worth bearing in mind in the management of great concerns. Manifestly, there is no leak in the Leeds ship, for its sailing capacity continues unimpaired, and it arrives at half-a-dozen new ports every year, buoyantly carrying annually a larger cargo of profits. The Leeds vessel was constructed to carry any amount of tonnage in the way of dividends, but nobody save a few enthusiasts ever thought it would have much to do to test its carrying powers.

The reader has seen the amazing manufacture always going on in the abattoir. It would feed the whole kingdom of an average monarch. A great general taking the field would be glad to engage the Leeds Society to provide his commissariat. Meat branches are now opened in Armley, Burley-

in-Wharfedale, Stourton, and Beckett Street, making the meat shops thirty-five at the end of June. These shops are really pleasant to enter. They have an abundance of light, air, ventilation, and are as clean as white enamelled tiles and marble can make them.

Co-operative farming is, early in the year, the subject of a very exhaustive paper of information, signed by Mr. Leach (president) and others, on the position, experience, success or non-success of the principal co-operative societies in England. The statement was laid before the Quarterly Conference. Farming is like meat selling. It needs the energy and perseverance of a Society like this of Leeds to discover the conditions of prosperity in dealing with the caprices of land and the irresponsible skiey influences to which it is subject.

In March a special meeting was called on Co-operative Farming. It appeared that within the last twelve months the business of the Society was over £800,000, and the profits had increased nearly £10,000. This looked as if the Society could afford to increase its departments by a good farm, but it became a reason for proposing that such an enterprise was "inopportune" (a favourite word, as we have seen, in Leeds resolutions). Again it carried the day. However, the question of the Society taking a farm was decided in an entirely different way while the discussion was proceeding.

Without waiting for the reconcilement of theoretical views on farming in general, Mr. Dean, manager of the abattoir, finds a farm is necessary in practice, and a farm was purchased in October, 1892, as an accommodation to the meat-making department for grazing purposes. It contains about 74 acres of land, and is situated at Farnley, about three miles from Leeds Its cost was £3,948. Meat-selling and farming have been the two cardinal difficulties of co-operative societies. Meat-selling has been solved, and so will farming be eventually.

The affairs of the Society were subject to an amount of criticism greater than the president had known before. The prosperity of the Society was such that it could very well bear any amount of criticism now, and take time to consider any wisdom to be got out of it.

In a discussion of the new education rate, Mr. Minnithorpe stated that the rule was agreed to with the understanding that the cost of tea meetings, the *Co-operative News*, and

Record, should come out of that fund. There was no harm in that. It was good to have a permanent fund out of which such useful costs could come.

Old salutary topics still ran in the minds of such prosperous members, who still thought profit could be made by equity to labour. A remarkable illustration was given in the *Record* that the business would well bear such a change and be the more profitable for it. The instance was the balance sheet of Brunner, Mond, and Co., alkali manufacturers, of Northwich, which showed a dividend of 50 per cent, in addition to £50,000 carried to their reserve fund and £36,000 carried forward. Yet there was no share accorded to labour, though the frightful condition of the working people was well known. Profit-sharing does not depend upon prosperity. The sense of equity is in the mind—not in the pocket. To accord to others what belongs to them and which can be withheld with impunity for the advantage of somebody else, implies, as the Scotch Solicitor-General said of Home Rule, "A new sense."

The subject of joining the Wholesale again recurs. Mr. Fawcett stated it had been many times before the members during the past twenty years. The directors, in their official capacity, had never thought it consistent with their duty (as in other matters) to recommend the members to join, otherwise the Society might have been connected with the Wholesale years ago. Between 1870 and 1880 many speeches were delivered upon the subject. In 1881, a report very much in favour of joining produced only a majority of six votes. In 1886, the Wholesale held a conference in Leeds in favour of itself, when Mr. Jones (chairman of the grocery committee) said it was not their interest, and therefore not their duty to join it. Many people, besides Mr. Jones, consider that interest is the measure of duty However, it is a merit of Leeds decisions that the for and the against of any question is usually set forth fairly.

One objection urged against joining the Wholesale was that no one knew if it was really solvent, through the habit of mixing the surpluses of the banking and trading accounts together. Mr. Brodrick replied that solvency could be ascertained. The question turns on principle as well as interest. Clear issues seem not to be tendered, and the Leeds Society, like Hamlet, have not solved the problem "To be or

not to be." The purchases from the Wholesale, without joining it, were for the half year (December) £16,967.

The importation of eggs and yeast has commenced. A memorial stone was laid in Brudenell Grove—another at Garforth. A coal depôt was opened at Guiseley. Something new is being opened everywhere.

The joinery and building departments continue to expand and now employ 135 persons. New stores are opened in Elder Road, Bramley; and one of mark in Elford Grove, Roundhay Road, was opened on the 14th day of April. The store itself is an imposing and handsome structure, as the reader will see for himself in the plate annexed. You may read of Park Buildings, or of Field Place, where no vestage of park or field is to be seen; but the Elford Store stands in grove-land—vistas of vernal beauty lie around it; and the spiral store adds commercial beauty to the place.

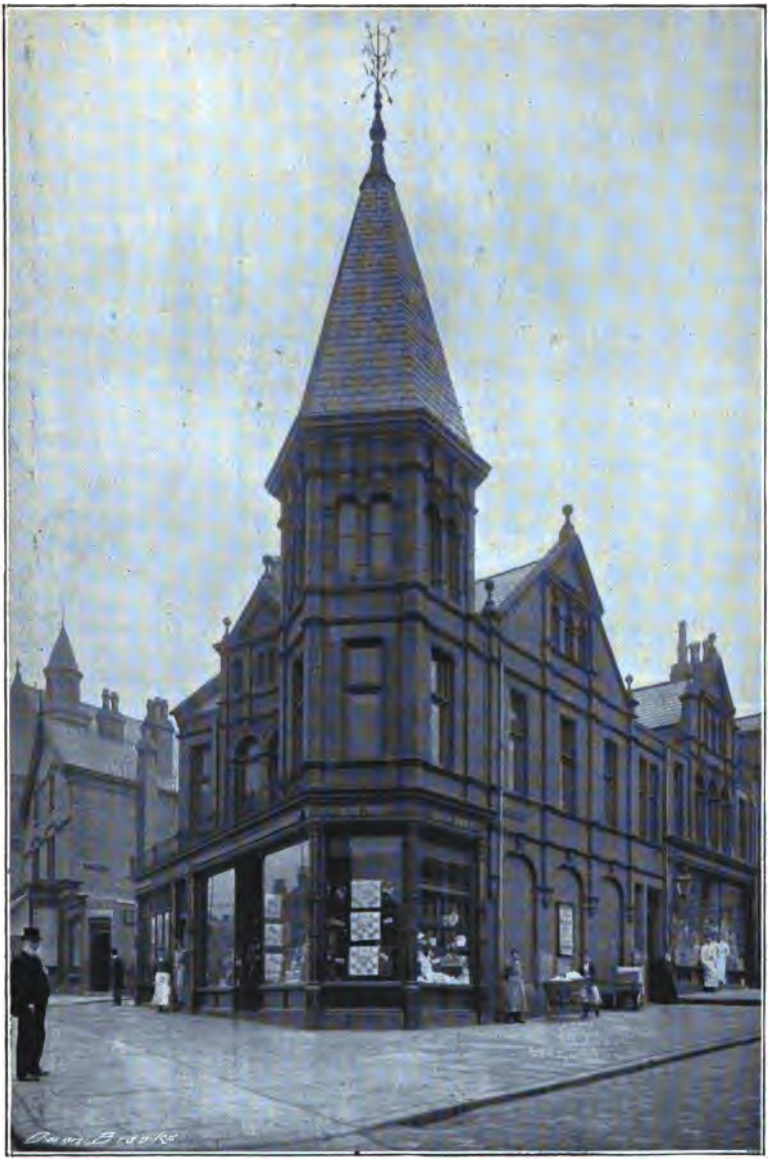
The growing trade of Strawberry House obliged a new store to be planned. The boot factory finds employment for 117 workpeople, and has made this half year 23,434 pairs, and repaired 14,229.

The present number of members (despite hundreds struck off) is 29,154.

The sales of the June half year were £46,123 more than a year ago. The profits for this half year reach £53,712.

The net profits for the December half year proved to be £55,475, making for the year upwards of £109,000.

In June, education has an award of £402; in December, it is £416, making a hopeful total of £818 for the year. Profits go up by leaps and bounds, to use a memorable Budget phrase, and nobody complains of the irregularity.



ELFORD GROVE STORES. [Owen Bros

1893.

PERPLEXITY OF THE NEW ZEALANDER IN LEEDS—THE STREET WITH THE NATIONAL NAME—PUBLIC TASTE IN STORES—DEATH OF A FOREMOST ADVOCATE—FIRE AND FLOOD—CRICKET FIELD HABITATIONS—THE LEEDS MUSICIANS AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE—TRADE DEPRESSION BUT NO PROFIT DEPRESSION.

SO many memorial stones have been laid by the Leeds Society that when Macaulay's New Zealander comes to study the ruins of Leeds he will be surprised—if excavations are being made—at the number of foundation stones laid by some ancient and extinct colony, historically known as Co-operators. He will conclude they were an opulent people which came over with the Romans, settled in Leeds, and built numerous palaces there.

Another Store of no mean pretension is in hand. The memorial stone of the new Central Stores in West Albion Street was laid on Saturday, May 8th, by J. W. Chapman, chairman of the Grocery Committee. At the meeting held afterwards, Mr. Chapman received a testimonial and a handsome gold watch. Mrs. Chapman was presented with a beautiful tea and coffee service. Travellers from abroad speak of "landing on the shores of Albion." The inhabitants are Albioners, a prettier and more resonant name than "Britishers." Albion Street is the most national name in the city, and the most famous of the stores of Leeds are destined to be found there.

One thing which will strike anyone now who shall visit the stores of city or suburbs will be their graces of structure in many conspicuous instances, and their architectural adaptation to local environment—always increasing the attractions of the district in which they are placed. The numerous estates the Society has bought and laid out—the wide roads they have made—the brightness and convenience of the houses they have erected—excel those which any People's Society have put up in any part of the land.

A loss took place this year, which store and city deplored, in the death of Mr. William Bell, whose name had been a

household word among co-operators "far and near" for years. References to him in these pages have been frequent. Further notice of him will be found in Memorable Workers. Fire has tried its hand twice at the mill, and now the flood came in October, doing damage to the coal department, and a sum of £174 has had to be paid for loss occasioned by the breaking away of one of the Society's boats. Had the coal wharf flood discharged itself on the mill fire there would have been economy in it; but the elements are not economists.

An eligible piece of land has been purchased near to Strawberry House Store, with a good frontage into Tong Road, for building shops upon. Blocks of cottages are commenced on the Ivy House Estate, and 16 houses on the Cricket Field Estate. Cricket is good, and, next to that, are good habitations for the people, and the Society has erected them.

In continued controversy upon the Wholesale, the Co-operative Union and the Wholesale Society are said to be, and are believed by some to be, one and the same. They are regarded as practically one. More distinctiveness might be to the advantage of both. The purchases from it this (December) half year were £18,681.

At the Crystal Palace Festival this year the Leeds Choir proved to be the best in competition with six other choirs. The *Musical Herald* said "some of the singing was of a *singularly* high standard"—a singular word to use in a vocal criticism. The singing had unusual excellence. The *Herald* adds: "The first winners (Leeds) receiving as many as 93 marks." The ascendancy of the Leeds musicians has been so often proved that the vast audience at the Palace, which witness and cheer them, always expect Leeds to win.

The profits earned in the June portion of the year were £54,376. A bright report for one of the dullest half years known. It is the cardinal advantage of a co-operative profit bank that members who have the good sense to buy at the stores can draw money out, who never put anything in. Very useful in times of distress.

Mr. Thornton, president, reports in the December half year that, after passing through one of the most prolonged and trying industrial crises of modern times, the sales have amounted to £410,386. The net profit being £48,460, making

a total profit of £102,836, not a bad sum to make in bad times. A surplus of £1,000 left over from last account was brought forward, and made £49,460 for distribution among members. The number of members at the end of December stands at 31,012.

Education was accorded the first half year £407. 16s. 6d.; the second half year £363—or £770 for the year.

1894.

THE AUXILIARY STORES—ARCHITECTURAL TASTE ECONOMY IN BUSINESS—TWO ESSENTIALS OF A CO-OPERATIVE STORE—OBLIVIOUSNESS OF ARCHITECTS—THE DISTINCTION OF THE DAY—PERIPATETIC SHOPS—WHAT MR. MAXWELL "HAS NEVER SEEN"—THE STRAWBERRY STORE—A MEAT EMPLOYEES' UNION—A CLEARING HOUSE FOR LATENT MEMBERS—LUCID BALANCE SHEETS—GREAT GROWTH OF THE SOCIETY—NO EDUCATIONAL INSOLVENCY NOW.

THIS is a great year, in which the Leeds Society establishes itself on the heights where it overlooks all the societies on the plains of the world. The Society has for years been climbing to its present elevation, and is likely to ascend still higher.

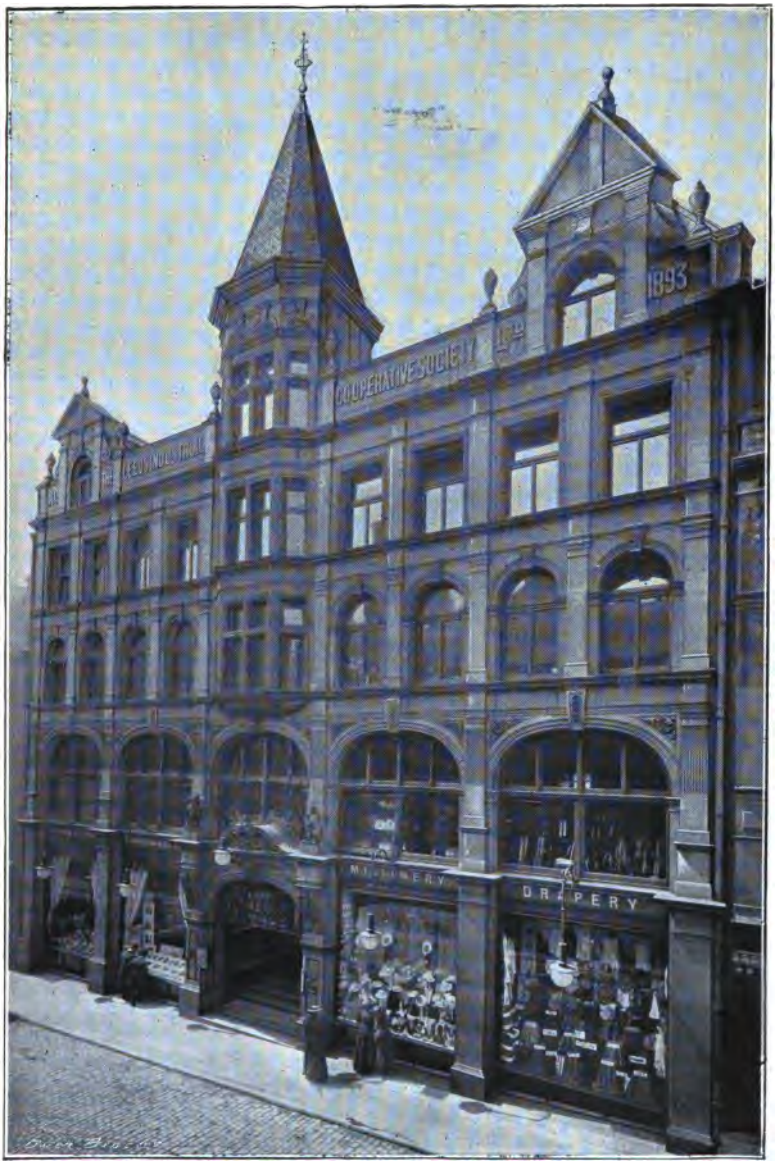
The chief event of 1894 is the opening, September 1st, of the new auxiliary stores in Albion Street, with a frontage worthy of the central stores on the east side, opened in 1884. In the adjoining plate the reader will see the imposing aspect of the new structure. The directors had not been intimidated by parsimonious criticism from giving another sky line to Albion Street, which does the eye good to look upon. There is a wasteful economy as well as a wise one. The architect paid the members the compliment of designing a store with which he was willing his own name might be associated. It should not be forgotten that members who own a building of taste share the credit of it. In struggling days when the plainest building can be ill afforded, cleanliness and light are all that

can be commanded. But when a society makes substantial profits, some beauty in its premises is a perpetual advertisement which pays good interest. Every tradesman knows that brightness usually means custom. Besides, what right have co-operators, who aim at public improvement, to put up dismal buildings? The structures of poverty are dreary by their nature; the structures of success should be the outward and visible sign of inward opulence. It is the logic of trade.

The new stores cost £20,000 exclusive of the site. The frontage in Albion Street is 80 feet, extending back 104 feet to Upper Mill Hill, covering a total area of 1,000 yards. It is to be the emporium of furniture, drapery, millinery, dress and mantle making. The top floor is a tailors' workroom. All the workrooms are lofty, light, and well ventilated. The building is lighted throughout with electricity. The floors are supported by iron columns with English steel and iron beams and girders, and each room is, as far as possible, fireproof. The ceilings, which are lofty, are panelled. Hydraulic hoists convey the goods to and from the several floors. No facility modern science can supply, and no grace which joiner or carver can impart, are wanting anywhere.

Adequate light and ventilation are two things which an architect may—remembering what so often occurs, one may say will—entirely forget, unless specially part of his instructions. There is no important hotel in London which has not now a portico enabling visitors to alight without being drenched in a storm. But not one was built with that convenience, nor was a portico ever in the architect's mind. Law courts are built in which it is difficult to hear anything, as is well known in Liverpool and elsewhere, although life and death depends upon the audibility of evidence. The object for which a place is built seldom occurs to the architect, and should be made known to him. In a famous co-operative town no purchaser is sure of the excellence of what he buys, by reason of want of light. In another, the working girls will not live out half their days for want of better air. Generally, co-operators have spent considerable sums to ensure light and health, and have succeeded. All the new stores of Leeds which I saw were marvels of space, of loftiness, of light, and of good ventilation.

At midday Mr. Lionel Thornton, the president, received from Mr. B. Hollings the silver key with which to open the



Albion Street Stores (West Side) [*Owen Brooks Leeds.*]

premises. Mr. J. Tetley, Mr. J. W. Fawcett, secretary, Mr. J. C. Malcolm, solicitor, Mr. Walter S. Braithwaite, the architect, and the directors and officials were present. Immediately the building was open it was thronged with a crowd of purchasers, and the assistants were busily occupied selling all day. The space and facilities of the various salerooms make purchasing not only easy but a pleasure. An immense showroom on the lower floor enables the visitor to see everything at once. A hall in the Arabian Nights may surpass it in magical beauty but not in usefulness, or modern trade splendour. It is rare to find in the most notable showroom one affording such an uninterrupted view. The directors, officials, contractors, solicitor, and architect all had luncheon at Brayshay's Restaurant, Bond Street, where speeches were made and amenities shown to architect, contractors, and workmen. Still the distinction of the day was the great procession. Vehicles and vans went through the town laden with happy occupants. Peripatetic grocers' shops, tailoring departments, brushes, drapery goods, joinery, doors, windows, abattoir produce, were again the surprise and delight of the streets. Two bullocks were drawn in the cavalcade, wondering very much what it was all about. A blazonry of mottoes, bannerettes, and information as to the sales and profits—which could be read on the different vehicles—amazed Leeds more than it had been before. The press testified to the excitement and admiration of the city produced by the famous display.

Tea was provided on a large scale in the People's Hall and also in the Crypt of the Mechanics' Institute. In the evening a public meeting was held in the Coliseum, at which the Mayor (T. R. Leuty) presided. Speeches were made by the Mayor, Mr. W. Maxwell, Mr. J. W. Fawcett, Mr. E. O. Greening, and Mr. J. Dockray; Mr. Abraham Greenwood and Mr. George Thomson were also present. Mr. Maxwell said: "During fifty years no movement had made greater progress than co-operation, unless it was temperance, and temperance was a sister movement. The temperance movement had been greatly aided by the co-operative movement. He had never known a working man build up with one hand at the co-operative store, and tear down with the other at the public-house."

Who knows that some project may not be started for co-operators to turn brewers, and flood the Wholesale with barrels of beer. Then what Mr. Maxwell "has never seen" will come true. A co-operative society of fuddlers would be a new thing, and if they were not that way given themselves their interest would be fuddling, which does not seem desirable.

In April this year the Hunslet (Church Street) Stores were opened. It was March, 1859, when stores were first established there, but the premises have been rebuilt, and a very handsome pile, which, as the reader sees, adds gaiety to the neighbourhood. There are many dull parts of Leeds where it would be to the interests of the inhabitants to invite the co-operators to open stores in their midst, to brighten up the neighbourhood and introduce commodities which could be trusted, sold on premises which are refreshing to see and to visit.

One of the most alluring names in summer months is a Strawberry House Store, situated in Armley. In front runs Tong Road, and the side street is called Strawberry Lane. This store was opened in January, 1882, but new premises were built and opened in November, 1894. A gayer business frontage is seldom to be met with, and it is, as the reader can judge, as alluring as its name. It is of no mean extent. Being but two storeys high, it is easy to ascend in search of special goods should not the lower windows with their affluent variety contain them.

A meat-sellers' employés' association has been formed, which is likely to be prosperous and useful. It need not be hostile. All groups or classes of persons have their own views and interests, which can be better made known and better dealt with when collectively thought out and agreed upon. Similar associations have long been in existence in connection with the employés of the grocery, drapery, and other departments.

The number of members struck off from time to time would make the fortune of many a store. Every society has a number of nominal members who are well removed from their books, but might prove good members elsewhere. There seems an opening for a Stores Clearing House where purchasers latent in one store might be most active in another. Persons who have once joined a store and have ceased to support it are an interesting study. If they do not return to the right path it is instructive to propagandists to know why they left it.



HUNSLET (CHURCH STREET) STORES [*Owen Brooks, Leeds.*]



STRAWBERRY HOUSE STORES, TONG ROAD. [*Owen Brooks Leeds.*]

The low price at which flour has been selling for some time has made a difference in the turnover of the mill. New purifying machinery is required, which will improve the flour and economise the cost. Better accommodation has had to be supplied by extensions and erections in several productive departments. Plans are being prepared for twenty-six additional houses on the Cricket Field Estate, and twenty-four on the Linden Estate. With the exception of excavating, slatering, and plastering, the whole work is carried out by the Society's own building department. Two new stores have been opened, one in Tong Road and one in busy Idle. A new store at Swinnow is progressing. This Society will soon, like Alexander, have to inquire for new lands to conquer—or otherwise discover new estates to purchase and build upon.

An essential feature in a commercial narrative is to show that the business is conducted on sound principles—has concurrent depreciation of its property provided for—has a prudent and sufficient reserve fund—and makes money. Therefore the history of every year, whether brief or long, shows what the gain is. Though the depressed condition of trade for the past twelve months has told somewhat upon the business of the store, the sales for the June half year have amounted to £420,987, and the net profits to £56,347. The president advises the members "to take a cheerful view," which they can certainly well afford to do. There never was occasion for misgiving—either on account of business which constantly recovers itself and increases, or on account of ambiguity in financial reports by obscurity or omissions. The balance sheets are entirely lucid and complete.

The December half year balance sheet reports the sales at £413,582. Each balance sheet always contains a paragraph in this form:—"The net profit for the half year, after providing for all expenses of production and distribution, and allowing a sum (£8,091 this half year) for interest upon capital and (£6,772, or whatever the amount may be) for depreciation of fixed stock, land, and buildings, according to rule, amounts to £51,570." This is the circumstantial way in which the item of profit is always stated. This half year, as there were £1,000 of profit standing over, there were £52,570 distributable among members. Members' share capital amounts to £396,976, being an increase of £23,896 over the amount of twelve months ago.

The June half year awards to education £422, the December period £386—in all £808.

Among other divisions of business we now see a bold headline in the *Record*, "Educational Department." Reports of the Educational Committee now show jubilency (if one may say so without being supposed to refer to Jubilee Day) instead of disconsolate insolvency. They have a certain income which enables them to give knowledge, pleasure, and recreation at discretion.

1895.

CONSTITUTIONAL DISSATISFACTION—RESPONSIBILITIES OF POPULARITY—"THE LEEDS RESOLUTION"—DIES BY ITS OWN HAND—DISTINCTION OF THE LEEDS MUSICIANS—NEW STORES OPENED, NEW MEMORIAL STONES LAID—ANOTHER WONDERFUL YEAR.

THERE are always some persons in every party with whom dissatisfaction is constitutional. Discontent is their vocation. They resemble the imaginary invalid who likes to be thought unwell, and who dismisses any doctor who has the imprudent candour to tell him there is nothing the matter with him. This kind of person is in every co-operative society, whose sole happiness consists in the belief that there is "something wrong"—who disagrees with everything, and if you did not contradict him he would die. The most courteous is obliged to disagree with them in order to maintain the full strength of the society. There is only one class of persons sillier than they—those who are discouraged because the irreconcilables are not contented. The bolder and more sensible kind of members are more indebted than they know, to these misgiving allies. When the day of triumph comes it is seen how valiant has been the wise persistency of members and managers who, despite the chronic alarmists, have brought the great prosperity to pass.

Popularity has its advantages and also responsibilities. Its advantage is that new projects come before it, its responsibility

is in giving heed to them. The alertness and enterprise of the Leeds Society has long produced a popular impression in its favour. If a stranger comes to England with some project he believes will be useful, but which needs a live society to test it, he instinctively turns to Leeds, and to nowhere else, as the most likely place to give new thought—which can make itself plain—a hearing. At Congress, a resolution brought forward by the Leeds Society commands attention. The resolution it brought forward at the recent Huddersfield Congress has been known ever since as the "Leeds Resolution." No other motion is known by the name of the city whence it originated. On that occasion Mr. B. Hollings moved a resolution for further development of co-operative production, and that a fund be raised to assist partnerships among workers. It was suggested by the writer that the word "co" be prefixed to the word partnership, which was accepted, but not officially reported. It was left to the Central Board, whose policy is opposed to the motion, to take the management of the fund, which thus died by its own hand. Had the employment of the fund, to which Leeds would have been the chief contributor, been placed in the hands of the known friends of labour in that Society, the resolution had borne fruit. The poet's counsel to workmen is—

> Make ye sure to each his own,
> That he reap where he has sown.

If a workshop resolution does not mean this, it does not matter what it means. It was courteous and well intending of the Leeds delegation to give the Central Board the opportunity of increasing its influence, by proposing to place this fund in its hands; but the Leeds initiative will not perish though their resolution has.

In 1881, when the Congress met in Leeds, the illustrations in the handbook then issued consisted with one exception of public buildings of the city. In this Jubilee handbook the diversified illustrations of buildings are those with which the co-operators have adorned Leeds. It does not need to borrow from the town.

The December number of the *Record* has the charm of a coloured wrapper; when open, it begins straightway with matter of interest, instead of advertisements, which now

appear on the wrapper. This is an improvement, since some new or relevant leaderette arrests the reader's attention.

Mr. Arthur Brownfield lectures this year, in the People's Hall, on the "Co-operative Commonweath;" Mr. Geoffrey Drage (now M.P.) discourses on "Co-operation and Socialism." The Women's Guild hold their fourth annual meeting. The various classes they have set up for instruction in domestic arts, which men never think of and could not do so much in that way if they did, show the great utility of the Guild, which does not know its own power yet.

Whenever the Leeds musicians come to the Crystal Palace now they take the chief prize. Indeed, the vast audience in front of the orchestra, before whom the announcement of the winners in the choir competition is made, always expect to see Leeds stand first, and it does. The *Record* reports that "the Leeds Co-operative Choral Society carries away the first prize at the Crystal Palace, conducted by Stephen Hirst, pianoforte instructor at Queen's Road Board School. This choir has now obtained honourable mention—a first, a second, and a first prize consecutively." In many ways we knew that there was leadership in Leeds, which might spell its name with an *a* in place of the second *e*.

The memorial stone of the new boot factory has been laid. A piece of land has been bought in Lodge Lane, Beeston Hill, for new stores. A block of old cottages, fronting Burley Road, has been bought to erect new stores upon. Capital in hand is so large that the directors decide to reduce the rate of interest on loan deposits from 3 per cent to 2½ per cent.

The making of furniture has commenced. The farm is shy and has not paid yet. Another block of ten through houses in Mitford Terrace are proceeding.

In the June half year the sales amount to £426,616, which is an increase of £13,034. The net profits are £53,331.

Though 441 more persons have been struck off the list of members, the present number (June 30th) stands at 32,349. The share capital has risen to £412,609, or more by £29,254 than at the end of June last year.

In the December half year the sales (which embrace 27 weeks) are £457,306, being an increase of £43,724, an increase to which all departments more or less have contributed. The net profits amount to £61,171.

Goods bought from the Wholesale during the December half year amount to £21,254, and from other co-operative sources, £10,166.

The share to education in June is £399; in December, £458, being a total for the year of £857. As this item grows with the growth of the Society's prosperity, every member has pride in belonging to a cause which unites intelligence and industry.

This is a wonderful year—nearly £884,000 of sales, more than £114,000 of profit, and upwards of £800 for education.

1896.

REVELATIONS OF INDUSTRIAL PHOTOGRAPHY—THE FIRST FLOUR SHOP—HALF A CENTURY OF PROGRESS—A JUBILEE CONTEMPLATED—MARSHALL STREET BUILDINGS—THE PARALLELOGRAM COME AT LAST—NEW FACTORIES BEGAN—THE DEBATING CLASSES IN OPERATION—ADDITIONS TO MILL AND ABATTOIR—NEW ESTATES BEING PURCHASED—NEW STREETS AND TERRACES BEING BUILT—PRODIGIOUS BUSINESS—ANOTHER MARVELLOUS YEAR.

NOBODY dreamed when photography was first invented that it would ever become a source of revelation greater than the telescope. Now it is found that when the most powerful instrument has brought the distant stars near to us, clusters of worlds—not previously known or suspected to exist—appear on the photographic plate. This chronicle will seem to many readers unconversant with Leeds and the co-operative capacity of the working class—like the photographic plate of astronomy revealing the existence of unsuspected stars. The existence of stores are revealed all along the line of fifty years, unknown or unremembered.

The adjoining picture represents the first of the flour shop series. The reader sees there the first flour agent's shop, which was opened in the year 1847. There is a pleasant air of domesticity about it. The children, who disport themselves

or romp about it, and are all the healthier and comelier for its existence; and if we could see them face to face, prettier for being able to obtain good flour instead of the pernicious mixture of alum and plaster of Paris which poisoned the poor man's family 50 years ago. Next year is the jubilee of that flour shop. There were prophets in those days—there always have been prophets—but the most adventurous of them never thought of predicting, and would not have been believed if he had, that within half a century of the opening of that humble shop on Stocks Hill, Bramley, eighty stores would be spread over Leeds and around it, and many of them imposing structures, some doing more business than was probably transacted in the village of Bramley in 1847. When the right sowers get the right seed, and sow it in the right place, the result is beyond all human forecast.

A special conference of local committees was held to consider how the jubilee of the Society was to be celebrated. Much interesting discussion occurred. The Board suggested a demonstration followed by a large public meeting, and a simultaneous publication of a handbook giving information of the vicissitudes and progress of the Society. The recommendation of a demonstration was adopted, as was the suggestion of a descriptive handbook. One member proposed that £3,000 be invested as an endowment fund to the Leeds General Infirmary, in which there should be a Co-operative Ward, which was not ratified. One member wished to see the endowment of thirty beds in a Convalescent Home. Other motions were made but were not adopted, all indicating generous views, having for their object the instruction and benefit of the public, as well as the members.

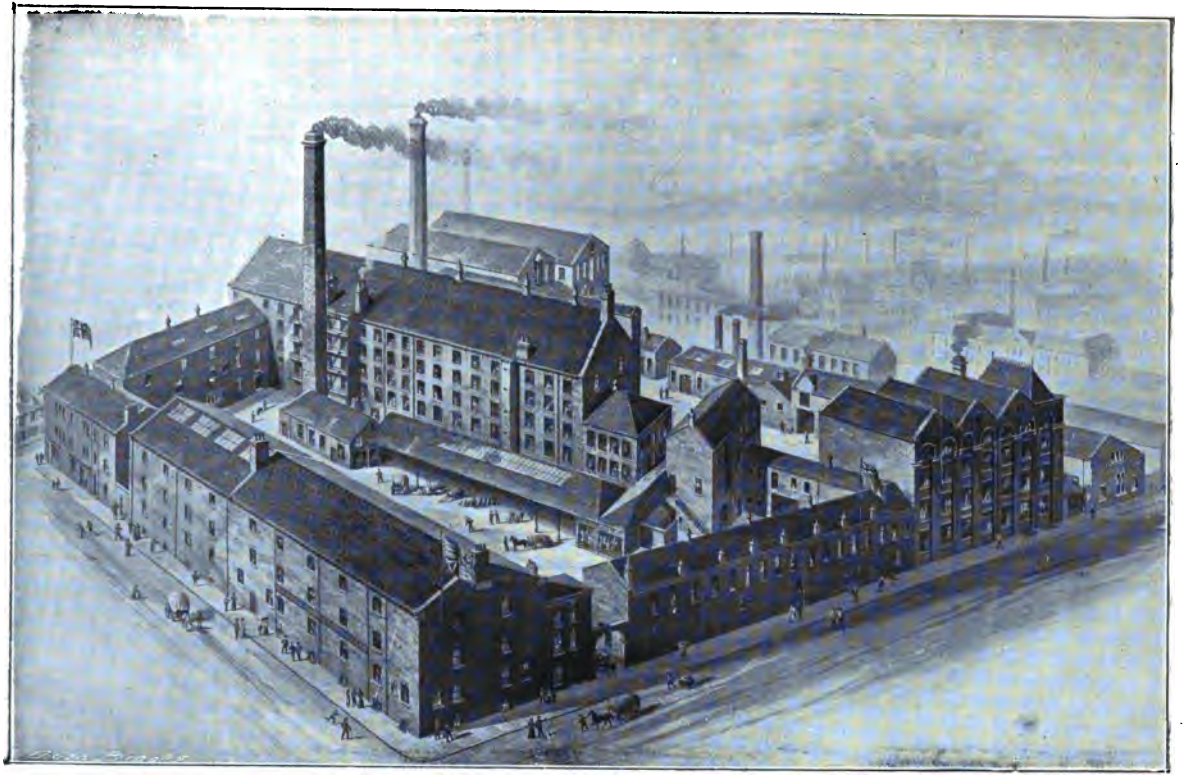
It is time the reader had a good view of the Marshall Street Buildings. There they are—comprising flour mill, grocery warehouse, boot factory, drapery warehouse, bakery, stables, and other premises. The entrance is now in David Street, the side-street is Manor Road, whilst Marshall Street may be said to be at the back of the premises, although the stores open into Marshall Street.

All the manufacturing energy of the Society has lain here. Extensions of productive power lie all about the city. But its concentration and growth began on this spot. Here is the People's Mill—the century has seen no other like it. It must

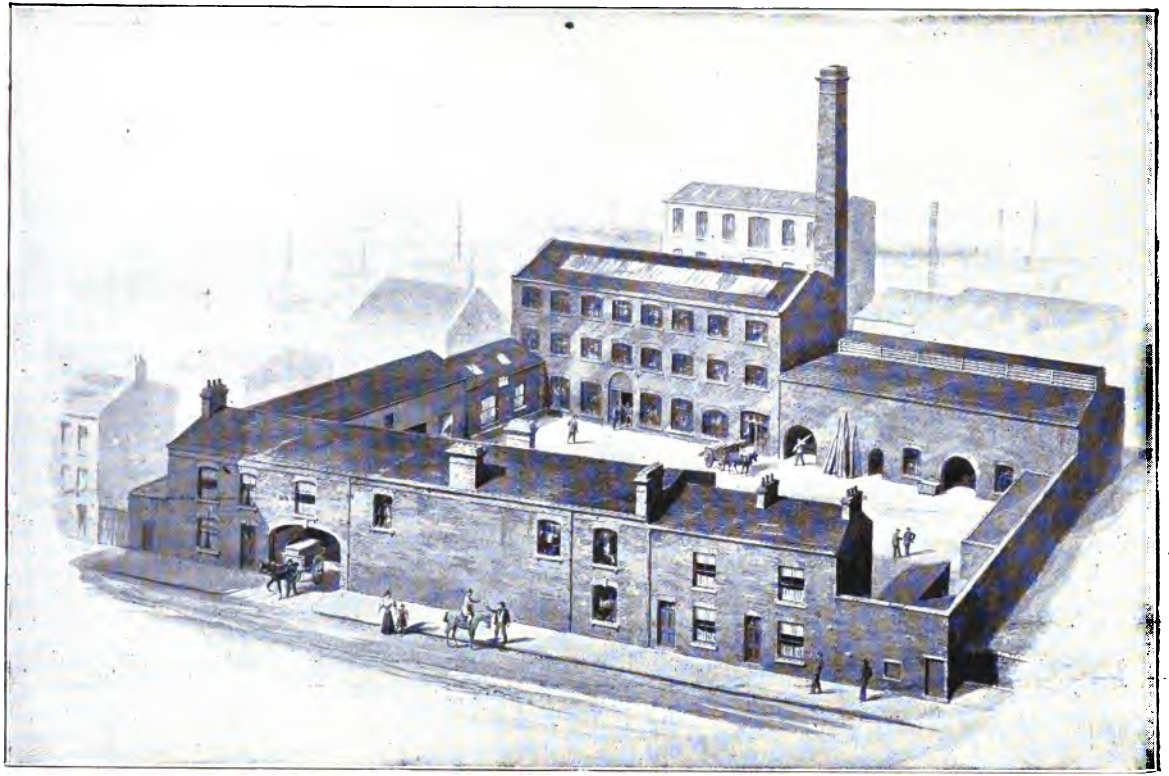


[*Owen Brooks, Leeds.*]

First Flour Agent's Shop,
Stocks Hill, Bramley—Opened 1847.



FLOUR MILL, GROCERY AND DRAPERY WAREHOUSES, BOOT FACTORY, BAKERY, STABLES, STORES, &c., MARSHALL STREET, HOLBECK. [*Owen Brooks, Leeds.*]



CABINET WORKS AND BRUSH FACTORY, BROOKFIELD STREET, HUNSLET. [*Owen Brooks. Leeds.*]

be owned that the Marshall Street structures, as presented in the plate, look very much like that Owen parallelogram which had such terror in Dr. Hook's days. The plate resembles a rude copy of Mr. Stedwell's design for Robert Owen's community, only the Marshall Street plate is of an industrial, not a domestic parallelogram.

These buildings have only been completed within the last few months when the blacksmiths' shop was erected, and the boot factory was completed only last year. In fact, these premises are always being altered or extended.

It has been found advantageous to separate the cabinet making from the joinering, and premises in Brookfield Street, Hunslet, have been purchased for this branch of the business, shown in the preceding plate. There is good work to be done in that block, though it is not so picturesque as it would be had the Society built it.

The Mill Committee represented on the next plate have responsible duties, upon which the prosperity of the mill and other departments more or less depend. They have the supervision of the mill, the abattoir, the horse-keepers, coal, ready-made and bespoke clothing departments, so that the demands upon their attention and judgment are many. Their duty also is to advise with the managers of the departments over which they have supervision, on all matters affecting the success of the business. The committee give a pleasant impression of being entirely equal to their work.

The Brudenell Grove Debating Society announce its session of subjects. Debating societies have been the daring projects of intellectual men for setting forth their views, and have not met with general encouragement. In later times it has been found that discussion not only adds brightness, but honesty to the understanding, and that no man is entitled to speak confidently upon any subject, and cannot be an authority upon any, unless he knows both sides of it—and no man can know that save by debate. Where debate is forbidden the charlatan is king.

The Board have had erected at the Society's abattoirs cold storage rooms, indispensable for freshness of food in summer. The storage has the same scientific completeness and conditions of sweetness and cleanliness as have all other departments of this great building.

A new compound steam-engine has been put down at the mill, and the three boilers replaced with two new steel ones. The dressmaking, which commenced eighteen months ago, is being better arranged, and has new conveniences of special rooms for fitting.

Capital grows faster than means can be found for its safe employment. Hence, as far as it can be well used, land has been bought at North Street, Roundhay Road, in Hogg's Field, and Kirkstall Road, for the enlargement of stores. Twenty-nine cottages have been bought at Burley-in-Wharfedale and land for twenty-one at Horsforth, and the erection of another block on the Cricket Field has been commenced. Purchases from the Wholesale this half year, £26,155.

Notwithstanding the reduction of the rate of interest, the share capital has increased during the past year (June 30th) £34,560, and now stands at £447,170. During this six months the turnover of the Society included 43,155½ bags of flour, 472 tons of butter, 212 tons of bacon and ham, 216 tons of lard, 57 tons of cheese, 48 tons of fruit, 1,500 tons of sugar, 500 tons of soap, 81 tons of rice, 25 tons of coffee, 51 tons of tea, 61 tons of syrup, 41,531lbs. of tobacco, 144,704 score potatoes, 38,468 hundreds of eggs, and 61,012lbs. of yeast; the meat department contributed 1,666 beasts, 4,511 sheep, 82 calves, 686 pigs, and 396 lambs; the coal department, 39,193 tons of coal; the boot and shoe department, 29,125 pairs of boots of the Society's own manufacture, and 24,173 pairs from other sources, besides repairs to the extent of 30,277. The only word which can describe this volume of business is the one Sir Walter Scott puts into the mouth of Dominie Sampson—"prodigious."

The sales in the June period of this the fiftieth year of the Society's existence amount to £464,705, being an increase of £38,088 over the last year. The net profits were the large sum of £63,771, which with the surplus £1,000 left over in the last account made £64,779 available for distribution, which gave a dividend of two shillings and tenpence in the £.

The sales for the December period of twenty-six weeks are £492,628, being an increase of £35,321 over the corresponding period last year, which contained twenty-seven weeks—yet the business this half year shows increases over that period: Grocery, £20,702; drapery, £4,244; coal, £4,867; meat, £2,819; ready-made clothing, £874; boots and shoes, £567; furnishing, £459.



MILL COMMITTEE: [*Owen Brooks Leeds.*]

JNO. EXLEY. ED. MANN. B. WEBSTER. JOSEPH PROCTER, *Chairman.*

The profits of the December period were £75,540. Where be the people now who said, if the Society added the sale of provisions to flour, it would be mad Utopianism. Who are the Utopians now? There is a Utopia of foolishness and a Utopia of wisdom which ventures on untried fortune. The Leeds co-operators have found the wiser one.

The share for education was £478 for the June period, and £566 for the December period, making a total of £1,044.

	£
Sales	957,333
Profits	139,312
Education	1,044

Another marvellous year. These are not like the paper profits in the prospectus of a new company, but real profits in the bank and in the pockets of members.

1897.

LOOKING BACKWARDS—THE FAMOUS PAST—DISADVANTAGES OF PIONEER TIMES—TRIUMPHANT DAYS—OPPORTUNITIES OF RULE REVISING—BUSINESS AND PROGRESS THE ORDER OF THE DAY—LOSS OF AN OLD LEADER—GENEROSITY OF THE SOCIETY—ITS SUPPORT OF CO-OPERATIVE WORKSHOPS—FIELD CLUB STUDIES—SCENIC CHANGES PRODUCED BY CO-OPERATORS IN LEEDS—SIX HUNDRED AND FIFTY HOUSES BUILT—THE CITY WITHIN A CITY—WHAT 37,000 MEMBERS MEAN—THE DISTINCTION OF LEEDS—WHAT CO-OPERATION REALLY DOES—MARVELLOUS RESULTS—A MILLION OF TRADE—ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY THOUSAND POUNDS OF PROFIT—THE PRESIDENT OF THE JUBILEE.

LOOKING back at the splendid career of the Leeds Society and its marvellous extension, it is impossible not to wonder at the hidden capacity of administration and device which no one suspected to exist. Not only was it not suspected, it was denied that working men could have these qualities. When did the higher classes show greater courage and resource in confronting difficulties, in mastering

the conditions of one business after another with which they were totally unacquainted? Mistakes were made, yet they were not discouraged; losses came, yet the industrial pioneers were not dismayed. Not like the rich, the workmen had no revenue to fall back upon. Losses appeared to them ruin, yet they never despaired. Those who said they knew nothing of the corn mill business, or the calculations of the provision trade, or the risks of manufacturing enterprise, spoke truly enough, and then gave themselves the triumphant airs which the prophet of disaster knows so well how to put on. Yet these working men and women never lost heart and never turned back. If they did not know what was necessary to success they could learn it, and provided they did not lose heart at their inevitable mistakes, they could succeed as others had done—and they did. Could gentlemen show more undaunted mettle. The battle of the Society, like that of Alma, has been won by men in the ranks. Mechanics, with all tradition, all experience, and all the prophets of social and commercial disaster against them, have built up the largest co-operative society that has ever existed. Nor is the wonder less if account be taken of the social disadvantages under which the Leeds Pioneers laboured. They could give no dinners to people in society who will talk anybody into repute so long as their cooks are expert and their wines and music good. They were not professors with salaries, nor persons of university attainments, nor even what Lord Lytton called "superior persons," who would look down on those above them, which contradictory quality is the way of "superior persons"—the pioneers were flax spinners or mechanics, working at the bench, or at the forge, or in the mill or printing office, or at the clerk's desk. They had no friends in the Press to write about them, who could do them good in the eyes of the public. If any in the Press were favourable to them, they thought very little of the corn mill enterprise, and had only a feeble and condescending tolerance of their co-operative projects, which were oftener denounced than commended. The pioneers and those who have carried on the work owe all to themselves, and the wealth of their jubilee day reads like a miracle.

The growth of this stalwart Society is as rapid and virile as ever, and loses sight of no condition of progress. This

year Mr. James Tetley, president, took the chair at the People's Hall, at a revision meeting. The rules in force are few, clear, and simple beyond ordinary, after so many revisions. The changes made from time to time have the marks of obviousness and necessity. It has often been complained that rule-revising meetings never draw large or enthusiastic audiences. That is because the members do not understand how a bad rule may degrade them, an unwise rule frustrate them, or a good rule exalt them. In a legal society the conditions of progress lie in the rules. Bad ones bow the head of the society very low, or prevent it being raised.

Business and progress are the order of the year. The output of flour for the June half year (46,928 bags) is the largest number ever reached, and yet it does not exhaust the capacity of the mill. It is in the course of things now to say that new stores are being opened, that old ones are being extended, that new land is being acquired. Now it is at Farnley and Meanwood, and an additional wharf in the Calls has been purchased, in order to relieve the pressure at Victoria Bridge.

Great regret was felt at the recent death of Mr. Isaac Earnshaw, who held a high place in the affections of the Society. He had been three times a director of the Society, president in 1889, and succeeded the late Mr. Richard Tabbern as the labour representative on the School Board. For a number of years he was one of the managers of the Leeds Skyrac and Morley Savings Bank, and was appointed delegate to the Perth Congress, but died on the third day of the Congress to which he was unable to proceed.

The Society has always been generous to workmen needing aid through misfortune, or in resistance to what they deemed injustice. The total of all the gifts members have made would be considerable. Lately, at a Conference of Local Committees, £100 were readily proposed in relief of the Penrhyn quarrymen. When the recommendation came before the members' meeting for confirmation, the same was increased to £200 and carried by a large majority. A vote of £100 was made to the Mayor's Fund for the relief of the famine stricken in India. A further jubilee offering to the Leeds District Nursing Fund of £300; Women and Children's Hospital, £300; and Popular Demonstration, £100, were cordially agreed to.

The purchases from the Wholesale are £26,404, and from other co-operative sources £12,421. The Society, as has been its wont, continues to accord friendly support to co-operative workshops. It has invested in thirty co-operative productive societies. Instructions were given this year to the directors to invest £260 in the shares of the Paisley Manufacturing Society.

The Naturalist Field Club was an early device (1891) of the Education Department, and a happy device too, for acquiring open-air knowledge. Interesting revelations are made of floral habitat, which, but for the club, many who walk with unseeing eyes in the suburbs of Leeds would never know. Some flowers are found on dreary canal banks which create an inducement to walk even there. How irrepressible and unfastidious—perhaps one ought to say how generous—is nature to light up with beauty unalluring places An educational fund is a source of civilisation, and exalts the society which has it. Curious sights they see at times. The *Record*, May, 1897, relates that the Rev. J. Bell discoursed to them on the natural marvels of Jamaica, and said "he had been told that negroes had no souls, but he had seen negroes as pious as any Englishman." *Numerous specimens were brought for inspection.* This creates great expectation, whether it be the English-minded negroes or their souls which were on view. The club has its calendar of events of the season, and the Women's Guild have theirs, and imposing calendars some of theirs are of meetings of business, and of social opportunities they ingeniously devise.

Whoever walks or drives about the suburbs of Leeds, and comes upon a bright, well laid-out estate, or streets and terraces, of new well-designed tenements, will probably find that the owners or builders are the co-operators. Three hundred houses erected by the Society have been sold to members, but it also advances money to members to enable them to purchase houses not built by the Society. About 650 houses have been erected by the Society. A number of houses have also been bought as investments. The Society carries on 13 distinct branches of business. It employs 1,380 persons. It pays in wages about £70,000 per annum. It has 12 coal depôts, besides its multitudinous stores and branches of other departments which are blended with the stores. It owns 20 boats and 70 railway wagons, with 78 horses and

81 vehicles. If Lord Rosebery was right in saying "Co-operation is a state within a state," the Leeds Society may be described as a city within a city, a new city within the old, having its own laws, its own government and revenues which it does not have to earn, and which increase while they sleep—provided they buy at the store when they are awake.

To have won 37,000 purchasers—who have pride in their own Society and prefer it, because it satisfies their intelligent taste—is a triumph of administration and business capacity. Sir Philip Manfield said, on one occasion, the difficulty of honest trading is—that "the majority of buyers have no knowledge of values." The Leeds Society must have instructed thousands of households in this knowledge, or there would not be the ever-increasing throngs at their counters.

Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, in a memorable passage vindicatory of the energetic city in which he resided, said: "You cannot make me ashamed of the old place, full of crooked little streets, but I tell you Boston has opened and kept open more turnpikes that lead straight to free thought and free speech and free deeds than any other city of live men or dead men."

In like manner, the resident of Leeds will not only be proud of its noble buildings and broad, bright thoroughfares, but may feel affection for even unlovely streets and grim manufacturing edifices, when he reflects that co-operative life and modern repute of Leeds have grown out of the activity, energy, and intelligence of its industrial population, who have stood up for independence, self-action, and self-help to a greater extent than any other city in the empire.

Co-operation does not make men perfect. There are few associations which do. Less pretentious than the aim of making men good, which seems beyond ordinary power, is the more practical aim of inventing facilities which enable men to be good. The faculty of being good, or of doing good, and the desire of it, and the pleasure in it, every man has, but there are millions without the facility or means of it. What they want is a way of establishing conditions of daily life in which it shall be nearly impossible to be depraved or poor. It is this at which co-operation aims, and which makes it a name of social inspiration.

The Leeds Society hold this year a real practical celebration of industrial success. It looks as though the items of business have increased themselves wilfully in order to present a triumphant appearance at the Jubilee. The extraordinary expansion of the Society's operation excites even the experienced surprise of Mr. Tetley, the president, the directors, and the general secretary, Mr. Fawcett. They relate with just pride that the sales for the half year reach the enormous amount of £549,987, an increase upon the preceding half year of £57,359, and over the corresponding period of last year is an increase of £85,282. The net profit available for distribution is £80,970.

Adding to the sales of the June half year those of the preceding one, it shows that the sales of the Society in its Jubilee year amount (as the president says with laudable satisfaction) "to the magnificent total of £1,042,616, an achievement which may justly inspire feelings of enthusiastic pride. It testifies to the abiding loyalty of the members, the ability and success of the management, and the ever-increasing solidity of the Society's position."

The proportion for education for the June half year is £596, which is as far as the accounts go at this writing.

On an adjoining page the reader will see the Educational Committee, which has one feature of good omen no other committee has. Mrs. Lees is the first lady who has been elected to any official position in connection with the Society (appointed April, 1896). There are alertness, energy, and thought in every face.

This chronicle of fifty years cannot be concluded in more striking words than those of the directors as expressed in their report: "We cannot take stock of our surroundings to-day without feeling that the splendid position we have attained is a matter for mutual and sincere congratulation. We may well stand amazed at the progress which has been made in the past, and it is impossible to predict what the Society may yet become. With 37,000 members, doing a trade over a £1,000,000 a year, making a profit of £150,000 per annum, with a capital of £485,000, and the accumulated experience of fifty years—no limit can be fixed to its possible future development and usefulness so long as the members have faith in each other and stand firmly by the true principles of co-operation."



EDUCATIONAL COMMITTEE: [*Owen Brooks, Leeds.*]

J. CAWOOD. J. COSTIGAN. WM. SWALLOW jun. G. W. WRIGHT, *Secretary.*

L. SCURR. MARY LEES. F. PEAKER, *Chairman.* G. E. EYRE.



[*Owen Brooks, Leeds.*]

JAMES TETLEY, PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY.

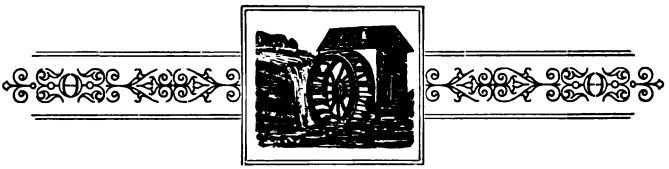
The Leeds pioneers have wandered for fifty years in the wilderness of industry to some purpose, and profits like a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night have never ceased to guide them on their way, and still nobler lights of another kind have shone upon their path, by which they have honourably profited.

On the preceding page we give the portrait of Mr. James Tetley, who will have the good fortune to be known as the Jubilee President, and happily witnesses the triumph of the Society whose interests he has so ably and strenuously promoted.

The Map.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE Leeds Mill and Store Society, arising in Duncan Street Coffee House, in 1847, has spread like the civilisation of Rome, not "o'er continent and sea," as Rogers sang, but, beyond all expectation, over Leeds, its suburbs and vicinity. When I met the directors to examine the geographical position of their great trading organisation, the Society's architect, who was present, exhibited two maps, one of ordinary size, and one on a much greater scale, which was necessary to enable the stores to be displayed in one map, which then was too large for handbook use. A third map, on a special scale, had to be constructed, in which all the stores in the city of Leeds could be shown, in a conspicuous way, easy to be traced. The plain, distinctive figures on the map enable any store to be at once identified. The stores in outlying districts and towns have their position indicated, and the geographical directions in which they lie. These entire 80 stores (which, however, are not the whole of the Society's places of business, as will be seen by the table of branches following) spread over an area of nearly 200 square miles. Some have compared the Society to an octopus, whose tentacles extend from Albion Street over all the circumjacent land. But it is no octopus of the kind Victor Hugo has described. The Leeds Industrial Octopus is not devouring, but bestowing, fertilising, feeding, and enriching all whom it reaches.



The Branches.

CHAPTER IX.

HERE in alphabetical order the member can find the birthday of any store to which he belongs. When I was taken a tour of the branches I began to make notes on their points of distinction. A second day, with the aid of a cab, was insufficient to visit all those of interest. Indeed it requires a week to circumnavigate the whole of Leeds store-land, and my notes would fill this handbook if they were written out in full. So Mr. Fawcett has compiled for me the bird's-eye table of all of them, showing when they were opened, when new memorial stones were laid, who laid them, and other facts of their history.

Date of Commencement of Stores.

Grocery Branches.	When Opened.		Laying of Corner Stone of New Store.		New Premises—When Opened.
	Year.	Date.	Date.	By Whom Laid.	
Albion Street (East)	1878	Nov. 8	Oct. 6, 1888	Thos. Wilberforce	July 19, 1884
Albion Street (West)..	1894	Sept. 1	May 6, 1893	J. W. Chapman	
Armley	1860	Mar. 19			
Avenues	1879	April	Nov. 9, 1878	G. Y. Marshall	
Bank	1859	June 27	Oct. 11, 1878	S. Goodall	1874
Beckett Street	1880	May	Nov. 15, 1879	Hy. Maundrill	
Beeston	1875	Oct.			May 7, 1887
Beeston Hill	1874	Feb.			
Bramley	1859	July 20			1878
Back Lane	1885	Sept. 19	May 30, 1891	Thos. Robinson	Feb. 6, 1892
Brudenell Grove	1892	Nov. 8	Mar. 19, 1892	L. Thornton	
Burley Lodge	1889	April 27	[Opened by	A. Wilson.]	
Burley Road	..		Oct. 10, 1896	Josh. Procter	
Burley-in-Wharfedale.	1891	June 6			
Burmantofts	1878	Nov.			
Calverley	1878	Oct.			
Cardigan Field	1881	Aug.	Jan., 1881	John Whittaker	
Carlton	1898	Oct. 20			
Carlton Hill.....	1879	Nov.	May 17, 1879	Wm. Emsley	
Castleton	1876	March			
Chapel-Allerton	1887	Aug. 19			
Delph Lane	1887	April 16	Oct. 9, 1886	Isaac Earnshaw	
Dewsbury Road.....	1866	April 20			Aug, 1898
Elford Grove	1892	April 14	May 23, 1891	S. Costigan	
Farnley.....	1874	May			
Farsley	1867	Sept.	June 9, 1877	John Thomas	1877
Garforth	1892	Nov. 8	June 11, 1892	Hy. Butterwick	
Gelderd Road.....	1890	Oct. 18	Feb 19, 1890	John Leach	
Greenside.....	1874	Sept.			
Headingley	1888	Oct. 18	April 28, 1888	Jas. Swale	
Hogg's Field	1877	July			
Horsforth.....	1875	Nov.	April 17, 1886	Joseph Claughton	Dec. 11, 1886
Hunslet.....	1859	Mar. 7			April 7, 1894
Hunslet Carr	1881	June			
Hyde Park Road ...	1877	Feb.			
Idle.....	1861	June			Dec. 8, 1894
Kendal Lane	1884	Dec.			

DATE OF COMMENCEMENT OF STORES—*continued.*

Grocery Branches.	When Opened.		Laying of Corner Stone of New Store.		New Premises—When Opened.
	Year.	Date.	Date.	By Whom Laid	
Kirkstall	1872	May	Jan. 19, 18 8	R. Tabbern	Aug., 1878
Lake Side	1889	Feb. 22	Sept. 22, 1888	J. H. Richardson	
Larchfield	1878	Mar.			
Linden Road	1889	Aug. 17	[Opened by	Jno. Lloyd.]	
Littlemoor	1879	Jan.			
Lodge Lane	1897	April 23	Aug. 22, 1896	Jos Wigglesworth	
Lofthouse	1875	April	Feb. 10, 1880	Wm. Hodgson	1880
Mann's Field	1878	April	..		
Marsh Lane	1860				1889
Marshall Street	1856	Aug. 21			Oct. 13, 1861
Meadow Road	1880	Feb.			
Meanwood	1876	Dec.			
Meanwood Road	1878	Mar.	1872	A. Ingleson	
Newtown	1872	Jan.	July 18, 1885	John Boyes	Dec. 12, 1885
North Street	1860	Feb. 20			Feb. 27, 1897
Otley	1878	Nov.			July 15, 1893
Pudsey	1859	April 4	1872	John Holmes	1878
Rodley	1875	Feb.			
Rothwell	1874	Jan.	May 20, 1882	J. W. Fawcett, Sec.	1882
Roundhay Road	1879	Aug.	Jan. 11, 1879	John Teasdill	..
Roxburgh Road	1879	Dec			
Saint Mark's Road	1877	Feb.			
Servia Grove	1885	Oct. 10	May, 1885	Joseph Dockray	
Somerby Street	1871	Oct.	July 10, 1880	Robert Webster	1880
Stanningley	1871	Dec.	Mar. 13, 1880	Wm Ackroyd	1880
Stourton	1887	Jan.	Oct 2, 1886	J. Haywood	
Strawberry House	1882	Jan			Nov. 24, 1894
Swinnow	1891	Aug. 28			July 6, 1895
Ward Street	1886	Sept. 25			
Wellington Road	1868	Jan.			April 7, 1888
West Street	1860	April 23			
Whingate Road	1879	Aug.	April 19, 1879	Wm. Baxter	
Woodhouse	1878	Oct.			
Woodhouse Carr	1876	July			
Yeadon	1871	Oct.			
York Road	1877	Nov.	May 5, 1877	Thos. Wilberforce	
Saltaire	1861	Jan.	[Closed	Sept. 26, 1885.]	

Drapery Branches.

Name.	When Opened.
Albion Street	November 8th, 1873.
Argyle Avenue	January 16th, 1886.
Bank	August, 1892.
Bramley	October, 1873.
Brudenell Grove	November 3rd, 1892.
Burley Lodge Road	April 27th, 1889.
Burley Road	March, 1881.
Dewsbury Road	July, 1892.
Elford Grove	April 14th, 1892.
Horsforth	November 29th, 1890.
Hunslet	August, 1873.
Idle	May 18th, 1889.
Marshall Street	March 31st, 1859.
Meanwood Road	March, 1873.
Otley	May, 1877.
Pudsey	March, 1873.
Rothwell	January, 1876.
Strawberry House	November 24th, 1894.
Wellington Road	November, 1878.
Yeadon	April 25th, 1889.
York Road	March, 1878.

Boot and Shoe Stores.

Name.	When Opened.	
Albion Street	November 8th, 1873.	
Dewsbury Road	July, 1892.	
Elford Grove	February 26th, 1897.	
Farsley	December, 1879.	
Greenside	April, 1874.	Closed, April 11th, 1877.
Hunslet	July, 1874.	
Kirkstall	January, 1885.	
Lofthouse	January 8th, 1897.	
Marshall Street	September, 1872.	
Newtown	December, 1885.	Closed, June, 1888.
Otley	October 6th, 1893.	
Rothwell	September, 1877	
Stanningley	August 7th, 1892	
Strawberry House	November 24th, 1894.	
West Street	October, 1874.	Closed, May 28th, 1890.
Yeadon	March, 1881.	Closed, April 25th, 1889.
York Road	March, 1878.	Closed, April, 1886.

Butchering Branches.

Name.	When Opened.
Armley	March 3rd, 1892.
Bank	April, 1888.
Beckett Street	May, 1892.
Beeston Hill	November, 1890.
Bramley	January, 1889.
Back Lane	February 6th, 1892.
Brudenell Grove	November 3rd, 1892.
Burley Lodge	April 27th, 1889.
Burley Road	May 28th, 1886.
Burley-in-Wharfedale	March, 1892.
Burmantofts	August, 1887.
Cardigan Fields	February, 1888.
Carlton Hill	December 16th, 1886.
Castleton	March, 1891.
Chapel-Allerton	September 19th, 1895.
Dewsbury Road	October 28th, 1886.
Elford Grove	April 14th, 1892.
Farnley	February 2nd, 1893.
Garforth	November 3rd, 1892.
Gelderd Road	October 18th, 1890.
Headingley	September, 1886.
Horsforth	February, 1887.
Hunslet	September, 1886.
Idle	June, 1888.
Kirkstall	September 30th, 1886.
Larchfield	December, 1892.
Linden Road	August, 1889.
Lofthouse	August, 1892.
Marshall Street	April 30th, 1886.
Meadow Road	November, 1891.
Newtown	March 26th, 1886.
North Street	February 25th, 1897.
Otley	September, 1887.
Pudsey	December 16th, 1886.
Rothwell	September, 1890.
Stanningley	December, 1887.
Stourton	February, 1892.
Strawberry House	January, 1890.
Wellington Road	October 7th, 1886.
West Street	August, 1892
Whingate	November, 1889.
Woodhouse	September, 1887.
Yeadon	January, 1891.

The aim of the Society is to have the branches half a mile apart so that they may not overlap, and no member have more than a quarter of a mile to walk to his store. Where the population is dense it is found advantageous to have the stores nearer. Outlying stores vary from five to twelve miles apart, and as there are eighty branches he who visited the whole on foot would find that he had a walk of nearly forty miles before him. A cyclist visitor would need a local road map to aid him if he ran round to them all.

Next to "Strawberry House," the name which most interested me was "The Bank." That seemed an entirely profitable place; but I found it was a district which would be better were it rebuilt, and parts of it would bear being made more sanitary. The working portion of the population appear to have no account at any bank, unless they have joined the store there, which has, as all stores have, a profit bank from which members can draw money out who put nothing in, save their custom.

The Cricket Field Estate at Armley, has a fine terrace (Mitford Terrace), built by the Society The houses were all sold before they were finished at £255 each. A refreshing terrace it is—no wonder it is sold; but forty more houses are planned. The Methodist New Connexion have erected a pretty church on a freehold plot sold to them by the co-operators, where prayers ascend to Heaven amidst sweet air, which must give the worshippers pride.

In recording the erection of tenements it is frequently said that those put up by the Society are "through houses." To a stranger this may need explanation. The term "through house" is used when the house opens into two streets—back and front. The working classes of Leeds generally live in what are termed "back to back" houses—that is, dwellings containing living-room, small scullery, cellaring underneath, and two or three bedrooms above, but with only one opening into the street. A through house usually has a sitting-room in addition.

At Hunslet I had the pleasure to congratulate Mr. George Oliver, the boot storekeeper there, on the success of his son, Ernest Oliver, who won the Neale Scholarship. Leeds took interest in promoting that scholarship, and it is right, as well as gratifying, that it should be held by a Leeds youth.



BURLEY ROAD STORES. [*Owen Brooks. Leeds.*]

A store in Hunslet had an ingenious manager who knew how to compose a label and how to write it neatly. A card on beef, or butter, or bacon, said "Really fine," "Very choice," "Delicious," "Take the piece," "Pick of the market," "Fit for a Queen." Anyone looking in the window felt he could not do very wrong in buying something. Every label kept clear of the egotism of the shopkeeper—"Buy *our* pickles," "*Our* speciality is buttermilk."

The Holbeck Works were a good day's work to go over. I should not have objected to a week's engagement for inspection, as I found they paid trade union wages and work only the recognised number of hours per week. The Society's wholesale storerooms—the Feeding ground of the branches—were a sight to see; a succession of food chambers about 70 yards in length. The countless rows of hams daintily suspended in compartments of white wood, might tempt a vegetarian to falter in his wholesome faith. Though I saw but half there was to see, I was hungry for a week after. But if I told everything of every branch, the reader might not live to the end—and would not forgive me if he did. As the reader has seen the first flour shop he ought to see the last branch—the new stores in Burley Road, not quite completed—comprising drapery, meat, and boot departments. It is a bright, obvious business structure such as purchasers love to see.



The Secretaries.

CHAPTER X.

A GOOD secretary is as the keeper of the Queen's conscience, since he keeps the conscience of the Society. He generally knows what it *ought* to do, and always knows financially what it *can* do. Following is a list of the secretaries of the Society so far as they are known :—

1847.—Mr. Emmerson.
July, 1849.—G. R. Thomas.
June, 1850.—Edwin Gaunt, to 1853.*
June, 1856.—William Emmerson.
January, 1858.—W. Bower—James Prentis, clerk.
June, 1858.—James Prentis, to 1874.
1874.—W. Benson.
1874.—S. Slater.
May, 1874.—William Swallow, to about May, 1880; and then Mr. J. W. Fawcett, the present secretary.

EMMERSON.—Mr. Emmerson, who has elsewhere been described, had been a schoolmaster, and with many excellent qualities he retained his pedagogic habit, and sometimes treated the members with the peremptoriness then thought becoming in a schoolmaster, which the members—not being children—resented, and so trouble came. This was the only ground of

* Mr. Gaunt cannot be traced beyond 1853, neither can it be said who was secretary from that time to 1856.

the strong difference of opinion regarding him, to whose intelligence, fidelity, and great service, the prosperity of the



WILLIAM EMMERSON.

(*See page 208.*)

Society in his day (1847-1856) was a good deal owing. This came to be discerned, and he received the respect due to many merits.

FAWCETT.—Mr. John W. Fawcett, who has exceeded all secretaries in the length of time he has held the office, was of Leeds birth, and inherits the energy and capacity for work characteristic of Leeds men. He was born on August 30th, 1844. Being one of a family of eleven children, of limited income, early activity befel him. Taking interest in the affairs of the Society, he was elected on the local committee of the Bank Store about the year 1870. Mr. Hunn, who afterwards became manager of the coal department, was then storekeeper of the Bank Store. It may truly be said that Mr. Fawcett never sought office, but on each occasion was pressed into service. He appears to have had a passion for work, and was content with that pleasure where he was. He was pressed to join the Board, and his name appears among the directors in 1872. Afterwards he was invited to fill the place of auditor, which he held for a short period. At that time a rearrangement of the office staff took place, and the directors advertised for a cashier. There were seventy-five applicants, but Mr. Fawcett was not one; but when the Board had to make a choice, they had difficulty in selecting a suitable person. Some appeared to think that Mr. Fawcett was the kind of person they wanted. During their deliberations Mr. Fawcett was auditing in the office below the Board-room. One of the directors came to him and asked him to allow his name to be placed on the list of applicants. At first he refused, believing that if his name was added to the list it might impair the chances of one applicant personally known to him—a very generous reason for declining. Learning afterwards that his acquaintance had withdrawn his name, Mr. Fawcett gave his consent, and within the hour he was informed he had been elected for the post. This was how Mr. Fawcett became cashier in May, 1874. In 1880 he was appointed secretary on the retirement of Mr. William Swallow. Mr. Fawcett's integrity and devotion have commanded the highest estimation of the Society. In addition to editing the monthly *Record* he has served on the committee of the Newspaper Society, at present represents the North-Western Section on the Central Board of the Co-operative Union, and has been ceaseless as an advocate far and near. The stranger finds in him accessibility—the charm in an officer where it exists. His energy is an unusual quality, for energy



JOHN W. FAWCETT, SECRETARY. *Owen Brooks, Leeds.*]

is often self-sufficient and abrupt. Mr. Fawcett has a youthful alertness; there are no wrinkles in his heart—the worst place in which they can appear. They add dignity elsewhere, so long as they keep clear of the mind. On Mr. Fawcett's recent recovery from a serious illness he was able to attend the conference at Burley, on July 24th, where he received an enthusiastic reception. The reader sees adjoining his eager, animated face, looking well at whatever may be before him.

GAUNT.—Edwin Gaunt (or Sir Edwin Gaunt), happily still lives to witness the great prosperity of the Society of which he was once both secretary and advocate. His reports had a brilliant aggressiveness in them in days when defensive arguments were invaluable. He had in his mind a standard of the movement higher than that in the minds of the members. Sir Edwin Gaunt was one of the first secretaries of the Society, from June, 1850, to 1853. Being Mayor of Leeds, 1887 (Queen's Jubilee Year), he was knighted. He is a hat, cap, and clothing manufacturer. The circumstances of Sir Edwin's early youth were such that he owes all his distinction to his own endeavours, aided by the excellent foresight and judgment of Lady Gaunt. In the days when he was connected with the Society he was intimately associated with Mr. Hole and Mr. Holmes, and like-minded spirits, which showed he had high qualities of his own to have commanded their regard. There is force of character as well as civic dignity in the portrait annexed.

PRENTIS.—James Prentis, whose son is the present secretary of the large Huddersfield stores, entered the service of the Society in 1857, was appointed secretary in 1858, and held the office until 1874. Mr. Prentis was in the employ of the Society 30 years. In 1858 (June 30th) he prefaced the report of the directors by a brief address to members, which shows practical knowledge and good sense beyond the average of his day. The business mind and the co-operative mind were blended in him, neither extinguishing the other. He held a high place in the regard of the Society, and in September, 1888, a purse of £20 in gold was presented to him, he being then in his 79th year.

SWALLOW.—William Swallow, when a youth, was employed as a junior clerk in the office of the Society. For a

considerable time he was a clerk in Tetley's Brewery. He was appointed one of the auditors of the Society, and in 1874 secretary, which he held until 1880. He has now a considerable practice as an accountant, and is auditor for a large building society and many co-operative stores. He has acknowledged ability both as a speaker and writer. He has continued an influential member of the Society, fertile in suggestion and forward to represent its interest in Congress or on the platform.



SIR EDWIN GAUNT. [*Owen Brooks, Leeds*]



The Presidents.

CHAPTER XI.

MANY think that a government of the wise would be a good thing, but such government has this disadvantage—it prevents anyone else being wise. Leeds has had a series of presidents who have enabled the members to acquire wisdom by sharing experience. It is a great quality in a president to maintain friendliness among members and to show respectfulness to all who desire to speak. Whoever feels himself slighted, or put down, is alienated. It is possible to enforce brevity and relevance with firmness; but firmness without fairness does not go for much. A president who stands "four square" is all the better if he has a Salamander mind, and can stand fire.

THE PRESIDENTS AND THEIR TERM OF SERVICE.

1847.—John Smith.
1848.—John Smith.
1849.—J. Terry Taylor.
1850.—Jas. Booth.
1851.—W. Eggleston.
1852.—Joseph Mathers.
1853.—John Carter.
1854.—Samuel Sands.
1855.—J. Terry Taylor.
1856.—W. Crowther.
1857.—J. Speed (six months).

1857.—Samuel Haigh (six months).
1858.—N. Nussey.
1859.—Samuel Haigh.
1860.—W. Bell.
1861.—W. Wildridge.
1862.—Jno. Hunt.
1863.—W. Bower (three months).
1863.—John Holmes (nine months).
1864.—John Holmes.
1865.—W. Wildridge (six months).
1865.—John Speed (six months).
1866.—John Speed (twelve months).
1867.—H. Nicholson (six months).
1867.—J. Speed (six months).
1868.—T. Newman (six months).
1868.—J. Geves (six months).
1869.—W. Wildridge (twelve months).
1870.—J. Speed.
1871.—W. Bell.
1872.—A. Ingleson (six months).
1872.—J. Speed (six months).
1873.—J. Speed (six months).
1873.—R. Tabbern (six months).
1874.—R. Tabbern (six months).
1874.—John Thomas (six months).
1875.—John Speed (six months).
1875.—S. Goodall (six months).
1876.—S. Goodall (six months).
1876.—W. Jones (six months).
1877.—T. Wilberforce (six months).
1877.—J. B. Baldwin (six months).
1878.—T. Wilberforce (six months).
1878.—John Teasdill (six months).
1879.—G. J. Marshall (six months).
1879.—W. Bell (six months).
1880.—W. Bell (twelve months).
1881.—W. Bell (twelve months).
1882.—W. Bell (twelve months).
1883.—T. Wilberforce (twelve months).
1884.—T. Wilberforce (twelve months).
1885.—T. Wilberforce (twelve months).

1886.—T. Wilberforce (six months).
1886.—J. Dockray (six months).
1887.—J. Dockray (twelve months).
1888.—J. Dockray (twelve months).
1889.—J. Dockray (six months).
1889.—Isaac Earnshaw (six months).
1890.—Isaac Earnshaw (six months).
1890.—John Leach (six months).
1891.—John Leach (twelve months).
1892.—John Leach (twelve months).
1893.—John Leach (six months).
1893.—Lionel Thornton (six months).
1894.—L. Thornton (twelve months).
1895.—L. Thornton (twelve months).
1896.—L. Thornton (six months).
1896.—James Tetley (six months).
1897.—James Tetley.

BELL.—William Bell was born March 1st, 1819, at Poston, near Driffield. He joined the Society in 1853; in 1856 he was elected on the Board of Management; in 1860 he became president, also in 1871 and 1880. The son of a rural labourer, who had a wife and eight children to support on wages of 12s. a week, young Bell had no advantages in early youth. He had the persistent voice of a Scotchman, and those who did not know to the contrary believed him to be of that nationality. He had also the Scottish love of knowledge. As a public speaker he had the eloquence of experience, was an influence in Liberal politics, and his advocacy could always be counted upon by his party. But his principal spare time and strength were given to co-operation, for which he had an enthusiasm. For twenty-seven years, until his sudden death, Mr. Bell was an able and continuous promoter of the Society. He had acknowledged ability as manager in a bolt and screw factory. Mr. Bell was the originator of the Educational Committee which consisted of seven or eight members, but only had a grant of £20 to advance their object.

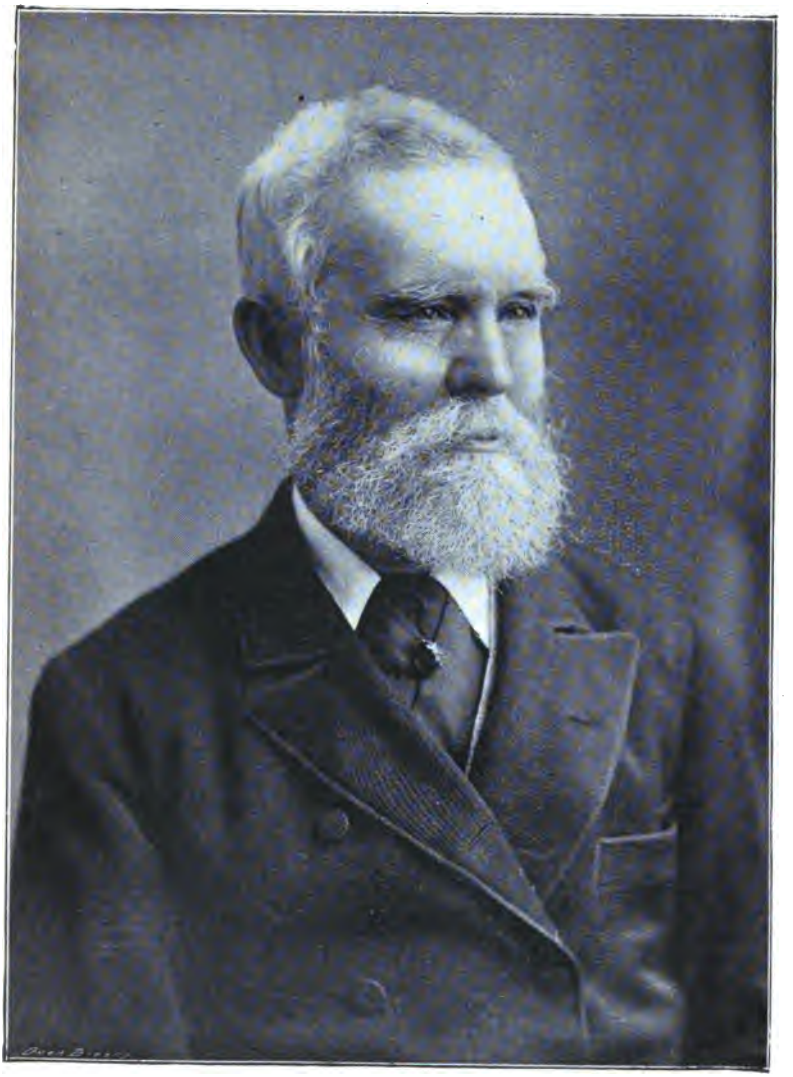
DOCKRAY.—Joseph Dockray became a member of the Society about thirty years ago, and took an active interest in the movement for many years, speaking frequently at meetings

indoor and the open air. He was elected a member of the Board in 1881, elected president in 1886 and again in 1887 and 1888. Elected again as director in 1889 and continued in office till 1894, when the time limit for serving as director rendered him ineligible for re-election for a time. Altogether he served as director and president about twelve-and-a-half years. Always conspicuous for zeal, courage, and ability.

EARNSHAW.—Isaac Earnshaw, born in 1840 at Beeston Royds, was sent to work as a half-timer at eight years of age. He afterwards went to the Kirkstall Forge; was a bank messenger in Leeds, and caretaker for many years of the offices of the Royal Insurance Company in Park Row. He was one of the managers of the Skyrack and Morley Savings Bank, and was always a man in whom confidence could be put. He was chosen to succeed Mr. R. Tabbern as the Labour representative on the Leeds School Board. In 1872–4–6, and again in 1882, he was a member of the Board of Directors of the Society, and in 1889 president. His death and character have been recorded in the Chronicle of 1897.

HOLMES.—John Holmes, one of the earliest and latest friends of the Society, carried on for many years a successful drapery business, from which he retired with a moderate fortune many years before his death. When last lecturing for the Leeds Society, Mr. Holmes came up from Methley to renew old comradeship with the writer in the cause of co-operation, in which Mr. Holmes's interest never abated, and his services were always at command as long as he had strength to render them. He was prophet and pamphleteer, and had a buoyant enthusiasm which sometimes excited mirth, but his earnestness and vivacity gave him an abiding place in the respect and admiration of all who knew him. Near or far, he spoke on any platform where co-operative listeners could be addressed. He had admiration for art, and heresy in his taste for pictures, of which he was unconscious. But it was his merit to be an enthusiast for art, when few persons of the middle-class engaged in trade were so. He was the most vivacious of all the presidents of the Society.

HUNT.—John Hunt was born May 4th, 1819, being now in his 79th year. He joined the Society in 1848 by arrangement. His wife's uncle held two shares, who let Mr. Hunt have one.



WM. BELL. [Owen Brooks Leeds.]

Membership was limited then, and those out could only get in by diplomacy. Mr. Hunt had just married, and like a prudent husband, or probably having a prudent wife, his thoughts were turned to co-operation as a means of improved income. The committee met in a Temperance Coffee-house in a yard near the bottom of Briggate. About that time the present writer lodged at it on some lecturing visits to Leeds. Coffee-houses in yards were very common then. In 1849, Mr. Hunt was elected on the Board of the Society. Among his colleagues he remembers E. Gaunt, W. Eggleston, R. Penrose (a name promising bloom), N. Nussey, John Speed (another name of good omen in a rising society), R. M. Carter, and W. Emmerson, secretary. This was a true committee of the time, for it held propagandist meetings to explain co-operative principles, and take down names of any willing to join the Society. These propagandist meetings were not public meetings, but held mainly in coffee or temperance houses, where working men frequented. Mr. Hunt had been employed as superintendent of the shipment of grain from railways to river warehouses. Thus he acquired a practical knowledge of the classes and qualities of wheat, and was able to be of use to the Flour Society. He knew what kinds millers bought, and why they bought them. From 1849 to 1857 he continued actively engaged in the affairs of the flour mill. During that time there were many stormy meetings. Fortunately the committee always had a majority of members of common sense and reasonable confidence to support them. Business obliged Mr. Hunt to go to Skipton for three years. He then returned to Leeds, and was president of the Society in 1862. During his residence in Skipton he continued his membership of the Society, and dealt with it.

LEACH.—John Leach is a Newcastle-on-Tyne man, where he was born in March, 1837. When a young man he went to reside in Middlesbrough, and came to Leeds upwards of thirty years ago. He shortly after joined the Society, of which he has been an active member, serving as a local committee-man and for several years on the Board of Directors. He was president in 1890 and was twice re-elected, holding the office for the full term of three years. He is well read, entirely intelligent, and a good speaker. Mention has already been made of his services. When a few years ago the writer had

the pleasure to deliver a series of lectures to the Society, Mr. Leach's interest in social education was very manifest; it was not a sentimental but a real practical interest, nor was his zeal abated by the trouble it imposed upon him, nor by the uncertainty of the funds which then fell to the committee.

NEWMAN.—Thomas Newman was an old member of the Society, and between 1860 and 1870 was several times elected on the Committee of Management. In 1868 he became president. At his death in September, 1885, Mr. (since Sir) John Barran, M.P., unveiled a memorial to him in the Burmantofts Cemetery, subscribed for by the members and friends of the Ancient Order of Romans.

NICHOLSON.—Henry Nicholson became a member of the Leeds Industrial Society at its commencement (1847). His number was 675. After business was commenced it was found more money was needed, and each member was called upon to take another share, and look for someone to take it. Mr. Nicholson's second share was No. 1,321. He sold his share "675," and retained share "1,321," which he still holds. Amidst all the ups and downs of the Society he has stuck true to it, and believes he has never had one pound of flour from anywhere else since the Society commenced to sell. No idle spectator he, but undertook the duty of a visitor to West Street, Queen Street, Bank, Marsh Lane, Marshall Street, Armley, Bramley, Pudsey, Farsley, Idle, Saltaire, North Street, and Clifford Stores, and, for a time, visited several once a month, to see if all were going on right. Taking stock and visiting the stores were all voluntary work. He has served more than 12 years as president (six months 1867) and director. Having been on the board with 24 directors and with 12, he believes that the business of the Society has been much better managed with 12 than with 24. His final and only protest is against stores selling beer. Mr. Nicholson's career has been one of ungrudging industry in co-operative service and in unchanging loyalty to the cause. Having been Grand Scribe of the Sons of Temperance for 30 years, he was in 1895 presented with an illuminated address and a purse of gold.

NUSSEY.—N. Nussey, who was president in 1858, is remembered for excellent humour, sound practical common sense, and eloquent persuasive force—not common qualities,



JOHN SPEED. [Cowen Brooks, Leeds.]

and valuable in days when turbulence was a frequent form of co-operative interest.

SPEED.—John Speed was several times president of the Society between 1857 and 1875. During the time when the Society was compelled by law to have a treasurer, Mr. J. Speed filled that post for many years; he guarded the finances of the Society and watched its expenditure as carefully as if it had been his own. When the law was altered, so that the Society did not require a treasurer, he was generally either president or a member of the directorate. It was no unusual thing, when any money was to be injudiciously voted by the members, to see Mr. Speed step to the front of the platform with his arms folded, and in his most impressive manner caution the members to think well before they gave their votes. The members had such confidence in his judgment in money matters that he many times saved the Society from loss. On his death, in 1879, the members instructed the directors to present to Mrs. Speed an illuminated address of condolence on her great bereavement. He was sincerely respected for the regularity and punctuality of his habits and strict uprightness of conduct. For thirty years he was Inspector of Weights and Measures in Leeds. He was a Liberal in politics, and attached to his party; he could put an argument lucidly and not without humour. Sagacity, integrity, and decision may be read in the portrait of him.

TABBERN.—Richard Tabbern, president in 1873-4, was a Bolton man, and was foreman or manager of one of the departments of the Kirkstall Forge. He was the Labour representative on the Leeds School Board. With the exception of six months, he was a director of the Society from the middle of 1872 to 1880. In 1880 he was appointed Clerk to the Board. He was nominee of the Leeds Trades Council, and was one of the "victorious eight" in a famous contest. He was but 56 at his death, April 12th, 1889. His interest in the wisdom of members was constant. In 1874 he reported that "the Educational Committee were putting their intermittent grants to good account, and were endeavouring to establish news and reading rooms in all the districts." He was among the earliest to acknowledge the services of the "various local committees for the very efficient aid they had rendered in furthering the interests of the Society."

TETLEY.—James Tetley, like Mr. Earnshaw, was born in 1840, but Mr. Tetley's birthplace was Bradford. Like all the presidents and memorable workers who are recorded in these pages, Mr. Tetley owes his distinction to himself. Not only was there nothing in his favour in his early days, but every thing was against him. At the age of nine he went to work in a factory. The chief incident in his mind up to that time was certain rejoicings at Pudsey (where his family then was) at the Repeal of the Corn Laws, which many families had glad cause for remembering. Afterwards he worked in a Bradford factory until he was thirteen. At the time of the Crimean War trade was depressed; his father died leaving young Tetley's mother with ten children, five younger than he. His apprenticeship was completed at Joseph Rhodes's, machine-maker, Morley. He became a member of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, having to go four miles to Dewsbury to find a proposer and seconder, there being no trade union in Morley then (1863). From 1864 to 1896 he had employment at Messrs. Tannett, Walker, and Co., engineers, Hunslet, Leeds. Always for union and improvement, he held various offices in the trade organisation to which he belonged, and represented it on the Leeds and District Trades Council, and represented the working engineers on the Conciliation Board, until co-operative duties took up all his spare time. In the meantime he had the good judgment to attend the First Course of University Extension Lectures on Political Economy, that he might form sound opinion on trade questions. On his first coming to Leeds he was invited to aid in forming the Hunslet Perseverance Co-operative Association, which, lacking essential agreement, did not succeed; whereupon Mr. Tetley joined the Leeds Society—which has known so well how to succeed—in which he has served on local committees, educational committees, board of directors, and twice as president, being elected the second time unopposed, whereby he has the well-earned honour of being the president during the Jubilee year. Mr. Tetley's record has been one of industry and progress, of persistent and intelligent perseverance, always taking interest and forwarding measures calculated in his judgment to benefit the masses, both municipal and imperial.

THORNTON.—Lionel Thornton was born in December, 1852, at Oldham, Lancashire, and was removed to Leeds in 1857, where he has resided ever since. Like so many others, recorded in these pages, he commenced work early, at the age of 10 years, as a wherry boy in the employ of the N.E. Railway Co. At the age of 12 he had the misfortune to lose one of his legs at the nail works, Whitehall Road, where he had gone to seek for orders. Worked for Messrs. J. Hattersley and Sons, Armley Road, 21 years. Married, in 1878, Annie Elizabeth, daughter of John and Elizabeth Jackson. Joined the Leeds Society in 1879, and in 1882 was elected a member of the local committee for Oak Road Store, and served for some time as secretary to the local committees of Wellington Road District. On the death of Mr. Tate, in May, 1889, he was chosen to fill the vacancy, and was re-elected until 1893 without opposition. The whole of the time he was a director he served on the mill committee. For two years he was chairman, and was elected president in July, 1893, and re-elected 1894 and 1895 without opposition. When but nine years old he attended the Methodist New Connexion Sunday School, St. Philip's Street, where he continued until 1889. He became secretary (at 16), teacher, and superintendent. He was put on the preachers' plan, and was much esteemed as a local preacher. In the temperance cause, in friendly societies, he is interested and active, and as a trade-unionist he is for the worker having a living wage. On laying the memorial stone of a new store in Brudenell Grove (1892) he was presented with a timepiece and writing desk, and Mrs. Thornton was given a silver tea service.

WILBERFORCE.—Thomas Wilberforce, rightly named, there being force in his character, is undoubtedly a Yorkshire-man, being born at Kirk Ella, in the East Riding. His father was a Chartist of the old type, who said what he meant and meant what he said. In 1875 his son became a director, which implied, as it had done years before, a good deal of work and very little credit. Thomas Wilberforce had wisely taken such opportunities, where information could be had, as were open to working men in his time. One of them was the Debating Class at the Working Men's Institute; here he acquired the power which only debate can give of mastering the facts of his case. Having a voice which needed no effort to hear it, nor

indeed could any effort prevent those present from hearing it, was a great missionary advantage to him on the platform. In 1877 he was elected president, and for the second time in 1878. At that time presidents were elected for six months, subsequently the term was made twelve. In 1882 Mr. Wilberforce was elected again, also in 1883, 1884, and 1885. He has held numerous representative appointments on the Central Board, and at congresses, elsewhere and otherwise. It was he who laid the corner stone of the new Central Stores in Albion Street, when he was presented with a gold watch and guard, a black marble timepiece with bronze pillars, two vase ornaments to match, and a portrait of himself. On his retirement some time ago, the managers and officials of the Society presented him with an illuminated address, expressed in terms which he highly values and may justly do so. For liberal political and social service, Mr. Wilberforce is counted in the press as one of the "Celebrities of Leeds."



Financial Progress.

CHAPTER XII.

ELSEWHERE in these pages when figures are cited, the rule of the writer has been to give them as nearly as possible in round numbers. Thousands and half-thousands give the reader a comprehensive idea of the values in question, but odd hundreds, or fractions of hundreds, slip from the mind. The official accounts of the Society are accurately stated down to farthings; but what reader ever remembers shillings or pence or farthings, and what does it matter if he forgets them? It is the bulk sum only which impresses or informs him. When Douglas Jerrold, lunching at a hotel, had salad served him, which contained an excess of gritty particles, he asked the waiter what it was. "Salad, sir," was the answer. "No," said Jerrold, "it is a gravel walk with a good many weeds in it." Fractions of pounds, shillings, and pence are the gritty parts of a financial salad. They are left out in the chronicle, that the edible portion may be better available for the enjoyment and digestion of the reader. Fractions, however, are the natural nutriment of the auditor, and in the following table they abound in their native luxuriance, indispensable in a tabular statement of finance.

Annual Statement—Membership, Sales, Profit, and Capital.

Year.	Number of Members.	* Sales exclusive of Goods transferred from the Mill and other Departments.	Profit.	Capital, end of Year.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1847†		5,000 2 5	*Loss*—43 15 8	1,926 0 7½
1848		22,058 6 4	37 2 6	2,734 6 0½
1849		22,926 16 4	135 13 2	3,075 5 6½
1850		26,126 12 8	506 15 4	3,925 5 6½
1851		26,789 16 2	253 2 1½	4,392 15 4½
1852		34,375 5 11	1,524 2 2	5,543 18 1
1853	.. .	58,382 11 6	4,387 1 2	9,222 17 0½
1854		64,073 16 6	1,440 19 2½	7,900 17 9½
1855		71,947 18 1	800 0 0	7,937 0 7½
1856		60,873 4 9	793 2 4	7,842 18 10½
1857	2,871	68,343 2 3	1,805 8 0	SHARES— 6,869 15 0
1858	Nearly— 3,500	53,836 10 8½	1,418 18 6	7,294 19 3
1859		49,961 5 9	2,207 5 8	8,914 19 11
1860	3,722	70,694 11 2	3,340 4 0½	11,351 2 3
1861		87,794 12 11	1,833 6 6	15,100 11 10
1862		75,409 8 4½	1,252 13 9	16,562 1 11
1863	3,555	59,319 1 0½	1,613 15 10	17,231 1 9
1864	3,452	62,552 16 10	2,490 9 8½	18,960 4 1½
1865	3,375	66,671 4 5½	3,388 6 6	19,222 8 1
1866	3,628	85,068 11 3	4,919 7 3	20,048 16 1
1867	3,954	87,634 1 9½	4,199 9 5½	20,675 9 6
1868	3,996	86,707 19 0	2,209 2 0	20,885 5 1½
1869	3,950	76,623 6 9½	2,897 15 3	20,425 16 3½
1870	3,969	74,100 16 2½	4,545 6 10½	20,599 10 6½
1871	4,840	95,095 3 4½	7,321 3 11	22,614 10 10
Carried f'w'd ..		1,492,367 2 7	55,276 15 7	

ANNUAL STATEMENT, &c.—*continued.*

Year.	Number of Members.	* Sales exclusive of Goods transferred from the Mill and other Departments.	Profit.	Share Capital.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Brought f'w'd.		1,492,367 2 7	55,276 15 7	
1872	6,756	140,168 7 8½	10,712 7 9	34,159 8 0
1873	11,365	249,003 18 9	19,933 14 5¼	66,598 7 5½
1874	14,009	327,812 4 9½	25,761 9 9	97,566 13 7
1875	15,986	345,542 12 1½	30,803 0 6	122,332 17 11½
1876	17,461	361,317 2 6½	34,616 6 8½	135,054 8 5½
1877	18,208	375,451 12 8½	29,957 16 10	132,628 9 8
1878	18,916	359,616 11 4	32,723 8 8	135,454 17 4
1879	17,174	360,658 12 3½	37,066 5 11	143,880 14 3
1880	18,430	412,224 19 0	38,168 4 3	162,524 16 2
1881	19,889	431,551 2 3	41,028 11 10½	174,685 16 3
1882	21,508	439,217 19 1	40,967 10 0	191,756 13 3½
1883	20,248	486,784 11 7½	50.020 13 0½	209,522 18 3
1884	22,108	490,167 9 7½	58,175 14 3½	222,468 2 0
1885	23,564	495,334 10 5½	59,314 11 1	245,067 6 11
1886	23,985	481,220 12 2½	54,737 14 11	251,235 19 4
1887	24,596	526,107 11 1½	63,977 2 11½	254,875 0 0
1888	25,2·8	559 811 13 6½	71,108 19 0½	263,416 12 6
1889	26,348	639,223 6 9	78,142 1 9½	265,320 7 10
1890	26,846	692 435 19 10	88,556 9 0½	292,839 11 10
1891	29,091	802,936 3 3½	100,804 6 6	324,697 12 0
1892	29,958	861,959 1 9	109,188 2 10½	352,347 13 1
1893	31,012	847 063 15 4	102,837 13 6½	373,079 18 11
1894	32,273	834,569 5 2	107,917 15 0	396,976 14 10
1895	33,122	883,923 10 1½	114,502 15 5½	429,875 4 9
1896	35,041	957,333 17 2½	139,312 2 9	461,827 19 4
1897†	37,540	549,987 19 8½	79,470 2 8	485,640 3 11
Totals, 50 years		15,403,791 12 11	1,675,081 17 3	

* The return of Sales relating to the earlier years of the Society's history will not agree with statistics previously published, as it has been found that the transfers of flour from the Mill to the Grocery Department were included twice. † Half year.

This comprehensive and authentic table will enable the reader to see at a glance and understand what the progress of the Society has been definitely. The affairs of the Society have been given in a hundred bi-annual reports which cuts the progress of the Society into two, and the reader sometimes has to perform an act of retrospective calculation to be quite sure what the yearly advance—whether by leaps or bounds or both—has really been. But no doubt will exist if he peruses the "Annual Statement of Membership, Sales, Profit, and Capital," which Mr. Fawcett has prepared for this chapter. Two committees are concerned with these enticing results. First, the Finance Committee, which have in their charge the "main chance," and certainly look as though it would not escape them, which it is apt to do unless vigilantly watched. The duties of this committee are mainly to find outlets and safe investments for the capital of the Society, by the purchase of land, the erection of stores and other buildings required for conducting the Society's business. Cottages and houses for members come under their consideration. In addition to the building department, they have the supervision of the office, of the drapery and check departments, the managers of which meet the committee from week to week.

These are no mean duties to discharge, as anyone will find who thinks over them. Members are not always conscious of the amount of thought, care, and labour which are being incessantly rendered on their behalf, and which deserve appreciation and regard.

The Grocery Committee, as that title indicates, have the general supervision of the grocery department, and, in addition, look after the furnishing, boot and shoe, bakery, brush-making, and cabinet-making departments. They have the managers of these businesses before them regularly. This committee have a considering, watchful, outlook expression, which bodes well for efficiency.

The next plate represents an important group of officers. The managers of departments are the practical agents of business prosperity. It is in their power to inspire or decrease the enthusiasm of members. Tact—that indefinable quality which means the power of doing what can best be done, where an instantaneous decision has to be taken in personal affairs, accessibility which delights the humblest member, and gives



FINANCE COMMITTEE:

J. WIGGLESWORTH, *Chairman.* S. WOOD. J. C. GRATION. JOHN LLOYD.

[*Owen Brooks, Leeds.*]



GROCERY COMMITTEE: [*Owen Brooks, Leeds.*]

JAS. BANNISTER. J. A. POPPLEWELL. W. T. BURNLEY. S. COSTIGAN *Chairman.*

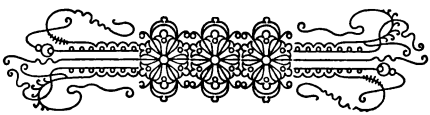
THE MANAGERS OF THE SOCIETY.

G. H. Breton. E. Hutton. W. K. Dean. A. L'Amie. J. Briggs. B. Bickerdike.



P. Rump. W Lugsdin. W. Shaw. F. Rust. J. Swallow. R. Whalley. A. Cooper. H. Gledhill. W. T. Fielding. H. Smith. C. Dawson E. Wilkinson.

him confidence to ask questions upon which his interest in the Society depends—patience, and readiness to oblige, so difficult to maintain under the pressure of business, and infinite repetitions of the same question by different persons. These are few of the qualities a manager need possess, and will deserve a prize medal if he does. Suggestiveness to the committee as to how business may be increased or improved, taste in the disposition of the commodities under their charge, are other qualities. But to name them all would be to write a manual of management. In the plate are portraits of the whole of the managers, eighteen in number.





The Leeds "Record."

CHAPTER XIII.

A LOCAL Co-operative Journal is a necessity of the Society, as soon as it can be afforded. The Leeds Society has had such a Journal since 1878. Its name is the *Leeds Co-operative Record.* The object of such a publication was excellently stated as "intended to supply a medium of communication between members of the Society and between the various sections of it, that suggestions and criticisms intended for its improvement might be known and considered within the Society without carrying them to outside papers," and inviting alien opinion upon "what concerns the Society alone."

This object has been well fulfilled. The qualities of the *Record* are effectiveness of statement, justness of criticism, efficiency in reporting, and discrimination in presenting relevant facts. This much was written long before the writer knew that Mr. Fawcett had been the editor. It did not seem possible that with the duties of general secretary anyone could perform onerous editorial work unless he had unusual energy and industry.

For myself, I have long had a prepossession in favour of the *Record.* My address as President of the Carlisle Congress was the subject of many reports and comments. The best of all was that which appeared in the *Leeds Record,* September, 1887. The only form of praise which has permanence in it is that in which things said or done by a person are cited. All

praise is barren without examples. The things done or the things said may be open to objection, or excite difference of opinion, but the reader knows what he goes upon in forming his own judgment. The means of doing this were given in the *Record* in a very ingenious and pleasant way. The reader is now forewarned that my judgment may be partial.

A contributor to the second number of the *Record* signs himself "Good Night." Considering that the *Record* was then only a month old, he might have said, more hopefully, "Good morning." Nineteen years have elapsed since that day, and it is not "good night" yet.

It is a merit not common in editorship, when authority is unobtrusive. Liberal impartiality is an aid to progress, but, as readers know, there is a good deal of professed impartiality which is not liberal.

The uses of a journal, as well as the taste of the editor, are shown by the extracts which adorn its pages. Articles on health, on food, quotations from lectures of mark in point of information, or of ethical significance, are frequently found in the pages of the *Record*. Its reports of lectures are of permanent interest, and remain instructive reading to this day. Another and rarer merit is, that advocates of a change of policy are treated with respect, and the arguments against their proposal, stated with relevance and force, without acidulated imputation, which is not uncommon.



Changes in Leeds during 50 Years.

CHAPTER XIV.

THIS is not the place to write an industrial history of Leeds during the Jubilee period of this Society—or of events which had their effects upon its fortunes. In themselves the industrial changes in the city have been remarkable. Two important branches of manufacture totally disappeared during the 50 years to which this history relates. The "stuff trade"—the manufacture of worsted goods, the lighter kind for women's dresses, the heavier kind for gentlemen's cloaks—had good repute for durability. Hand-loom weaving was done at home, the weaver having a loom in his bedroom. If there were two women in the house, there would be a loom in each bedroom. There was occupation, it is true, but the wages were poor, the homes of the workers squalid, and their lives miserable. The quarter in which they resided has become a condemned area. About the time when the Flour Society began the stuff trade migrated to Bradford, so rapidly that for years serious effects were felt in Leeds.

The other lost trade is flax spinning, which employed many thousands of hands. "Benyon's men," whose doings have been related, were flax spinners. Benyon Mill was one of the great mills engaged in this trade, which also comprised linen manufacture of all degrees of texture. This once great trade has died slowly (not yet quite extinct), which has enabled some disbanded workers to get other employment with less privation.

Among new trades is the leather industry, of which Leeds has become the most important centre in the United Kingdom.

In the past half century the iron trade and machine making have extended wonderfully. Although from time immemorial Leeds has been the metropolis of woollen manufacture, it is now difficult to say whether woollen or iron is king.

A yet more remarkable new industry is the ready-made clothing trade.

Here a circumstance is worth mentioning because it concerns a pioneer and an early member of the committee of the Flour Society—Richard Penrose, who had an initial part in the creation of a new industry at Saltaire. Fifty years ago Leeds had a considerable dyeing trade, and still does a considerable amount of dyeing for Bradford manufacturers. It has often been told how Mr. Titus Salt obtained his first sample of alpaca wool, but it is less known, if known at all, what decided him to make his first purchase. Mr. Penrose was the manager at Croisdale Brothers, well-known dyers in East Leeds, and was on friendly terms with Mr. Salt, who, when he had obtained in Liverpool his first sample of alpaca, brought it to Mr. Penrose and asked him "whether he had ever seen material like it before." Penrose, being struck with the appearance of the fibre, at once said, "Titus, it will either be a penny or a golden collar" (whatever that might mean). Mr. Titus Salt was to call a week hence to learn how the alpaca behaved in the dyeing tub. It took the dye well, and when finished had a brilliant appearance. Mr. Salt duly appeared, and when Mr. Penrose saw him crossing the dye-house he was so anxious to tell him the result that he called out, "It is a gold collar, Titus," which proved a true prediction. Mr. Salt was so astonished at the look of his sample that he never opened his lips, which was probably prudence as well as surprise. He hastily wrapped it up, thrust it into his pocket, actually ran across the yard, went straightway to Liverpool and purchased at his own price the whole of the alpaca wool, stored as useless in the dock warehouse. From this incident rose Saltaire mills, Saltaire town, and the fortunes and title of Sir Titus Salt.

Among the changes in Leeds ought to be named the advantages which so large a number as 37,000 families now obtain for themselves by founding or joining the great Co-op-

erative Society. No one denies the great change thus brought about; before another Jubilee the number of members may be many times larger than now, and the original object of improving the resources and raising the class of workers may be attained yet more effectively.

There were two brothers well known in Leeds as Tommy Hurst and Billy Hurst, as they were familiarly called. Billy Hurst was the first man who suggested the introduction of cotton warps into woollen cloths, which he foresaw would one day become one of the most important branches of the woollen trade in future years; this forecast became true. Like many other inventors, he died in poverty without reaping the reward of his pernicious ingenuity; one scarcely knows whether to be sorry or glad at his miserable end. Now Thomson and Sons, of Woodhouse Mills, Huddersfield, is almost the only firm known where pure wool garments can be had. Mr. Ruskin has had to set up mills in the Isle of Man, where pure cloth can be made; and a German clothier is making a fortune in England as a manufacturer of garments of pure wool, absolute honesty in manufacture being almost a lost art.

Buslingthorpe became the local seat of the leather trade, the reason being that never-failing springs of water existed on the premises of some establishment of that day, just as the excellence of the fustian made by the co-operators of Hebden Bridge depends upon the water which they possess and control.



Memorable Workers.

CHAPTER XV.

THE reader will find, as he may expect to do, memorable workers among the presidents. Though all presidents were notable workers, all workers were not presidents. Many ardent workers had all the merits of presidents without holding that particular office.

It will be most convenient for reference to give the names alphabetically, though the order of service would be interesting, as early service means much in the success of a society. Directors are included in this chapter. As a rule, directors work for the Society like railway trains, who are never happy unless they are running. In earlier years of the Society they fared worse than locomotives, who do get coal and water, while for many years directors were fed on nothing, and worked incessantly all the same. It will be seen that the lives of some of these workers for the Society are part of the history of Leeds, as well as of the Society, and throw new light on the pioneer days.

ACKROYD.—William Ackroyd was foreman of the grocery warehouse at Holbeck. He died suddenly, in his 66th year, on his way to the Great Northern Railway Station. He had been in the service of the Society for twenty-five years, and was so highly respected that his remains were followed by a long procession in which were the president, directors, managers of stores, assistants and employés, and temperance

officials (Mr. Ackroyd being of that persuasion). Straightforward and cheery, his public virtues were temperance and duty—two honourable characteristics by which to be known.

BAXTER.—William Baxter, formerly director. He retired, going into business on his own account in the woollen trade, and now resides at Kirkstall. He had a reputation in the Society as a good worker, whose name was given to one of the Society's boats—proof that he was held in honour.

CAMPBELL.—William Campbell is in some respects the most remarkable member of the Society. He has been concerned in co-operative affairs since 1834, when Mr. Craig was at Ralahine. He is now in his 87th or 88th year, can read without glasses, and is as ready and effective on the platform as men are thirty years younger than he, and is likely to concern himself with the welfare of the Society for many years to come. He is, as Sir Walter Scott would say, the "old mortality" of the Society, and anyone who lingers near him can hear more of the past life of Leeds than from any other inhabitant accessible, as newspaper interviews testify. He is a peripatetic encyclopœdia of Leeds municipal, industrial, and co-operative history during three generations. For nearly fifty years he has been a total abstainer, nor does he smoke; temperance and co-operation are the two things he most values. He is a Woodhouse man, the firstborn of his family, and the only survivor. Save during his apprenticeship as a tailor at Otley, he has passed the whole of his long life in Leeds, and was always known as a good workman at his trade. He was the first representative who went out of Leeds in the ready-made clothing trade. In 1859 the Co-operative Society commenced the clothing trade, of which Mr. Campbell was the first manager. Mr. Campbell has been familiar with all phases of co-operation in Leeds; he has been twice a director, first in 1875 and 1876, and again in 1886. He served on various committees and was hon. secretary of some, where his labour and correspondence were all gratuitous. He took the situation as canvasser for the Society's brush department in 1888–9 on commission, and succeeded in greatly extending its business. About fourteen years ago the Leeds Tradesmen Invalid Institution, by a large majority, voted him a pension of £26, but when he accepted the situation of agent for Mr. Brown-

field, whose pottery he preferred to sell because there was profit-sharing for the workers in it, Mr. Campbell, with his usual scrupulousness, resigned his pension as he was then able to earn his own living. Very few men at his age would voluntarily undertake again the risk of self-support, fortunately when this power ends he may claim his pension again.

CARTER.—Robert Meek Carter, so far from being "meek," had energy and aspiration in him in a notable degree. Charles Knight would have put him among his "exemplars" of self-made men. From beginnings the humblest and most inauspicious, reared where education of any kind was not to be had, subjected to vicissitudes and hardships which few ever surmount, he came into Leeds in a carrier's cart and became senior M.P. for the borough. Alderman R. M. Carter was born in 1814 at Skeffling, in the East Riding. When a young man the Co-operative Society attracted him, and in 1849 he was elected a member of the Board, and, as in all things, he was enthusiastic and active on behalf of the Society, rendering no mean service during many years. A man of enterprise and affairs, he found his way to the aldermanic bench and to the House of Commons. I knew him well while he was in Parliament, and was his confidential adviser (being nightly at the House) in matters in which every new member is a learner. A man of strong sense and aptitude, Mr. Carter would have made his mark there, in things with which he was conversant, had not commercial troubles befallen him. The Tipton Colliery, in which he induced the Society to embark, cost it great loss. Many were angry at him, but never lost respect for him, as his disinterested enthusiasm and sincerity were manifest to all. He died within a day of attaining his 68th year. As a director of the Society, he still retains a sympathetic place in the memory of the members. He was one of the few Englishmen of his class who had the American courage and capacity of adaptability. In youth he took any position open to him. In after life, newness of project, which repels men of ordinary ability, was to him an incitement and delight. His fault was that he entered on too many—not for his capacity, but for his strength. Of robust constitution, he was one of those men who are too strong to live. Incessant action gives no pain, and the machine of life stops without warning.

COSTIGAN.—Samuel Costigan was born in 1857, and is a native of Leeds. He joined the Society in 1883. He served on the local committee for Bank Store for three years, and was elected a member of the board of directors in 1889, which office he held three terms—four-and-a-half years. He was appointed to lay the corner stone of the Elford Grove Store on May 23rd, 1891, which at the present time is one of the largest stores the Society possesses. He was presented on this occasion with a testimonial consisting of a silver lever stop watch and gold albert. In January, 1895, he was again elected a member of the board of directors, has a further service of two-and-a-half years, making in all seven years' service as a member of the board of directors. Mr. Costigan is a thorough co-operator, a vigorous speaker, and a strong advocate for the extension of co-operative production.

DAWSON.—George Dawson, of Bramley, has been a steadfast friend of the Leeds Society from its first day till now. Yet he refused a seat on the directorate on the modest ground that he did not think himself sufficiently educated. But he proved he was by the wise and disinterested wish of seeing the affairs of the Society in, what he thought, more competent hands than his own. Some of the originators of the Leeds Society went to Bramley in 1846—a sort of John-the-Baptist-forerunner-class of co-operators. They addressed the people on Stock's Hill, well known to visitors to Bramley. When the Leeds Society was projected, Mr. Dawson paid his guinea. He is the first person among the early promoters of the movement mentioned as having a guinea about him. Many others would have done as he did, had they had the money. The majority of the pioneers were like Jerrold, who, when a friend asked him "If he had a mind to lend him a guinea," answered "He had the mind, but he had not got the guinea." Mr. Dawson says guineas were very scarce among workmen in those days. His friends told him he would lose his money. Mr. Dawson replied that he was willing to run that risk. A levy was made of £1 more from each shareholder; he paid that also, declaring he had no distrust of the success of the Flour Society, and went all over Bramley canvassing persons to join the Leeds Society. He found many well-wishers, but very few good helpers. Nearly all expressed a desire to see how the project would go on before they joined.

There was no pioneer blood in their veins. Had they been pricked, nothing would have trickled out but a watery mixture of prudence and timidity. But Mr. Dawson found a few in Bramley of the braver sort, and in 1847 there were twenty members of the Leeds Society there. Mr. Dawson says the first branch was opened in Bramley, which is now entitled to *its* jubilee, seeing it was opened in the first year of the Leeds Society. There was on the occasion a demonstration and procession from Leeds to Bramley. A band was engaged and played the first load of flour into Bramley. The shopkeepers called a meeting to consider how they could circumvent the new movement, and they determined to reduce the price of flour per stone, which they thought would ruin co-operative flour dealers. On the contrary, it did them good. It caused many who were not co-operators to respect them since they had conferred an important benefit on all the poor consumers of flour in the town. After a few years a rumour got abroad, supposed to have been originated behind grocers' counters, that the Flour Society was going down. Intelligent members would have looked into the affairs of their own Society and inquired at headquarters how matters stood. But working people were not very intelligent then, and treated a rumour as a fact, which they ought to have suspected of being of malicious origin, and many members withdrew in alarm from the Society. Mr. Dawson was of sterner stuff, had clearer judgment, and the "crisis," as it was called, only induced him to work harder for the Society, and canvass for new members. He attended all the meetings of the Leeds Society, although his hours of working were to nine o'clock. To attend the meetings he had to give up an hour earlier, and then walk to Leeds, for there was no railway or tramcar at that time. Still he went regularly to give his report and take part in the Leeds meeting, then held at Sammy Hall's, and as the meetings were often continued to a late hour, it was morning before he got back to Bramley. On many occasions, when they had had a long meeting, he only got back in time to change his clothes and go to his work. Co-operation was founded by men of this noble zeal. The Bramley Depôt was then on Stock's Hill (the reader has seen a plate of it, p. 47), and the storekeeper was Samuel Merrit. Mr. George Dawson is

now in his 80th year. It will be seen that many of the facts of this narrative are derived from the oldest living authorities. When the second Jubilee comes round, the origin of the Society will all rest upon history and tradition.

EXLEY.—John Exley was born at Staincliffe, near Dewsbury, in 1840. Before he was nine years of age he was sent to work in a woollen mill, in which business he was brought up. In 1871 he came to Leeds with his family, joining the Co-operative Society the day after his arrival. After having been a member for about twelve months, he was put on the local committee of the Hunslet (Church Street) Store, in which office he served without break until his election as a director in January, 1894, since which time he has sat continuously as a member of the board. Besides his active interest in the co-operative movement, Mr. Exley has always taken a deep interest in temperance, in the Sunday School, and in fact every movement he could aid which has a tendency to lift up and improve the condition of the worker.

GREEN.—David Green was a notable member of the Society, who had had considerable influence in the formation of the opinions of its early members. He was on the first public committee in 1847. He was the founder of the Redemption Society, as has been indicated. He was known to social reformers all over Great Britain. He was the printer of provincial innovators in his day.

HOLE.—James Hole was a man of remarkable ability. He was foreign correspondent and confidential clerk to a well-known firm of merchants. He was for many years hon. secretary of the Yorkshire Union of the Mechanics' Institute, and founder of the successful system of Village Libraries in connection with the Union. He left Leeds for London to take the position of secretary to the "Associated Chambers of Commerce," which situation he held to his death. He was one of the pioneers of the Society, the best informed of all its early allies, and was one of those who lost his seat as director through his advocacy of forward co-operation. He was an advocate of most movements of his day which sought progress by reason. Instances have already been given of his influential activity. Born in London in 1820, he died there February 24th, 1895. His principal social work was done in Leeds,

where, the *Record* says, "he formed a semi-political and social commonwealth." He was commonly spoken of by London publicists as "Mr. Hole, of Leeds." Mention has been made of his chief works.

HUNN.—Allan Hunn, though he has retired from the service of the Society, and lives at Boston, Lincolnshire, still retains a high place in the regard of the members for his services to the Society, which have been elsewhere mentioned.

INGLESON. — Abraham Ingleson held the important position of horsekeeper for many years, and was considered a most efficient servant. He had previously served on the board of management of the Society, both as president and director, and was an earnest and effective speaker at festivals and local meetings.

LLOYD.—John Lloyd, member of the present board of directors, is a native of Denbighshire, North Wales, and came to Leeds in 1879, having accepted a situation in the carriage and wagon department of the Midland Railway Co., where he is still employed. From boyhood he has taken keen interest in political and social questions. Soon after his arrival in Leeds he joined the Industrial Society and became an earnest advocate of co-operation, and for several years an active member of the local committee in the Dewsbury Road District. He served also on the educational committee, and was elected a director in July, 1886, which office he held five years, and was again elected to the same position in January, 1895. On the opening of the new stores in Linden Road, in August, 1889, he was presented with a timepiece, a walnut writing desk, and a handsome teapot for Mrs. Lloyd. In thanking the donors, he said that "co-operation aimed at making men and women honest, true, and self-respecting. The fruits of the labours of the Leeds Society were to be found in thousands of homes made happier and brighter by it."

PROCTER.—Joseph Procter, one of the present directors of the Society, was born at Guiseley, near Leeds, in March, 1851. He was the son of a small farmer, and had to commence work at an early age on the farm. At the age of 14, getting tired of being a son of the soil, he was apprenticed to a joiner. After finishing his apprenticeship, he came to Leeds in 1871. He became a member of the Leeds Society in 1878, having

previously been a member of the Guiseley Co-operative Society for six years. He was elected on the local committee for the Wellington Road Store in 1884, and served on the committee until July, 1893, when he was elected a director, and has served in that capacity for four years unopposed. On the 10th of October, 1896, he laid the memorial stone of the Burley Road New Stores, on which occasion his colleagues and friends presented him with a gold watch, and Mrs. Procter with a tea and coffee service.

RICHARDSON.—J. H. Richardson, formerly director and an active member of the Society, has been for many years a servant of the City Council and manager of the Corporation Sewage Works. He was formerly a coal miner, and was one of those who strenuously opposed the investment in the Tipton Green Colliery.

SWALE.—James Swale regards himself as one of the oldest members of the Society (though there are members older than he in years), and has preserved most of the printed documents of the Society. His first connection with the Society was in 1852, but he was acquainted with all the proceedings which led to its formation, as he discussed them with his brother-in-law, Joseph Nowell, one of the seven who signed the first circular from the Benyon Mill. He would have been one of its first members, but his parents were shopkeepers. As soon as they ceased to be so he joined the Society. In 1859 he was elected a director. He was concerned in urging members to build stores adjoining the mill, with a large meeting-room over them, to which was given the name of the "People's Hall." He and a friend, Mr. H. C. Atkinson, one of the directors, a joiner and builder like himself, drew plans of cottages, which the directors accepted, and they were instructed to build them. At that time many of the members were downhearted, thinking the Society was spending money it would never see again. Mr. Swale and others went into highways and byways as recruiting serjeants of co-operation. In 1881 he was again elected a director, and took an active part in making arrangements for the Congress of 1881. In 1883 he was appointed to lay the stone of a large store at Headingley, one of the aristocratic suburbs of Leeds, when he was the recipient of a handsome presentation in commemoration

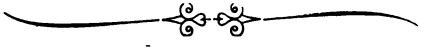
of the event. In the "Chronicle" instances are given of Mr. Swale's activity. He was the author of the interesting narrative of the formation and principal proceedings of the Society from 1847 to 1882.

TATE.—William Tate was widely known and respected. For twenty-nine years he was bookkeeper at Messrs. Asquith Brothers. He was elected a director in 1887, and served also on the finance, grocery, and mill committees, and always had a clear grasp of the business before him. He maintained his quiet, ready wit and humour, which oft enlivened his colleagues, concealing from them internal suffering which ended his life in his 45th year. Both directors and members passed resolutions of condolence to Mrs. Tate, which were communicated by Mr. Fawcett.

WHITAKER.—J. W. Whitaker was formerly director and chairman of the mill committee. He holds now an important position in the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, and resides in Manchester.

WEBSTER.—R. Webster, whose death is recorded in the *Record* for February, 1891, was an earnest, active worker in connection with the Leeds Society. He was first elected on the board in July, 1879, and served six-and-a-half years. The last time he was elected was in 1884, and he retired in January, 1886, much esteemed for his straightforward, consistent conduct on all occasions. He was in the 63rd year of his age at the time of his death.

Many more workers might be cited did space permit. Many names of mark have already been given in the chapter on presidents.



Productive Operations.

CHAPTER XVI.

THOUGH in the Chronicle of 1896 a striking summary of the business of the Society, productive and otherwise, has been given, it will be an advantage to the reader to see the facts in a conspicuous form. Indeed, on many pages of this handbook accounts are given of the rise, progress, and operations of various productive departments; nevertheless, the scattered facts will be better estimated collected together. Therefore, a compendious table of the productive operations of the Society has been prepared for this purpose and for convenience of reference. The Society may be considered to have mastered the question of distribution, and has attained no mean success in its attempts to solve the more difficult problem of production. New distinction lies before it in this direction. If it should carry forward, on co-operative lines, manufacturing enterprise, Leeds will establish its supremacy in the development of production as it has in distribution. Those who have the power of realising the quantities and values expressed by figures, will be able to understand how great already are the productive operations of the Society.

PRODUCTIVE DEPARTMENTS.

YEAR ENDING JUNE 30TH, 1897.

	Turnover.	Profit.	Wages.	Number of Hands Employed	When and Where Commenced.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		
1. Flour	153,792 12 2½	7,309 3 11	2,695 15 4½	31	1847.—Holbeck.
2. Bakery	10,473 5 1[illegible]	790 19 1½	1,207 13 7½	18	1879.—Holbeck.
3. Bespoke Clothing	8,745 18 11½	1,080 19 8½	3,083 3 10	51	Albion Street.
4. Boot and Shoe Factory	24,534 6 8	2,368 12 9	7,647 1 6½	168	1873.—Holbeck.
5. Brush Factory	3,148 1 10½	.214 15 11	710 19 8	10	1884.—Roxburgh Road.
6. Cabinetmaking	533 2 10	1 14 1	405 14 2½	34	Meadow Road.
7. Building	20,340 6 1½		12,468 11 3	193	Holbeck.
8. Millinery	4,922 19 6	1,115 7 7½	264 10 4	10	1881.—West Albion Street.
9 Dressmaking	458 16 9	94 19 1	366 12 7	24	1895.—West Albion Street.
	£228,949 4 7[illegible]	£12,976 12 2½	£28,860 2 0	541	

3.—In 1881 it was decided to separate the Bespoke from the Ready-made Clothing Department. Prior to this date, the two branches of business were combined.

5.—Commenced in premises connected with the Roxburgh Road Store, but now carried on at Brookfield Works, Hunslet

6.—The Cabinetmaking business was commenced in 1895, and was at first worked in conjunction with the Joinering Department In 1897 it was transferred to Brookfield Works, specially bought for its accommodation.

7.—The Building Department was commenced in 1875 at Holbeck, but was removed to Meadow Road in 1891. It will be noticed that no profit is shown in this department, the whole of the work being charged to the Society's own account, at net cost.

Characteristics of the Society.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE story of these pages has been ill-told if characteristics of the Society are not already conspicuous, yet some merit a final enumeration. For instance—it was given in Parliamentary evidence (1856) that the Society could have undersold its adversaries, the millers, and make a large profit and did not do it; principle stood first in their minds and commercialism second. Their object was to benefit the members, not to destroy others.

The majority of the early members were unable to tell good flour from bad, and rather preferred the bad, as was often proved in the objections they made to the good. The directors could have fooled them with cheapness and given them fraudulent flour and won custom by it—and contempt. They did not do this; the directors stood by the honour of co-operation.

Another thing they did—they gave a higher price for wheat than any miller in the market did, as they professed to buy the best, and they did buy it—but it was not "good business," as a late Royal Commission was told, but it was good faith. In the long run good faith paid; it gave the Society an honest reputation, which means money. Dr. Braithwaite, who was for many years a member of the Society, said on one occasion, "I always recommend my patients to purchase their flour from the Co-operative Society; it is the best flour in Leeds; it is always used in my family."

Wood and Holdsworth, for many years the principal firm of billposters in the city, used the Society's flour in their business. Another billposter one day said to Mr. Wood, "Where do you purchase your flour for making paste?" "We buy from the Co-operative Society," he replied. "I can tell you," said his friend, "where you can buy flour, for making paste, a good deal cheaper." "We have tried it," said Mr. Wood, "but we find co-operative flour the cheapest; it makes a lot more paste, and it sticks a good deal better."

Thus, if the Society needed to rely on "testimonials," as some tradesmen do, it could have had telling ones, which everyone could know to be genuine.

Another feature, which belongs to the Society alone, is the existence of local committees in connection with each grocery branch, which were, for a long period, the only propagandist agency, in addition to the board of directors, possessed by the Society. These committees, directors, and presidents are elected at ward meetings, invented in 1858. The term "ward" was borrowed from municipal or Parliamentary bodies, but used as a term of co-operative organisation, signifying the divisions in which periodical assemblies of local committees took place. In 1870, notices appeared of thirty-one ward meetings, and thirty-one halls or rooms in which they were all held on the same night. The custom continues, though the number is greater now.

Leeds is the only co-operative society which in its early days took, in its certified rules, power to fine irrepressible orators, which showed that the Leeds Pioneers were conscious of being in an animated community. Emergencies arose, as we have seen, which justified the precaution. Yet stormy meetings are not always evil, inasmuch as they show interest in the affairs of a society. An inquiring mind alone gains knowledge. The evil is when members act on suspicion or conjecture. To put forth suspicions as facts is unfair, since it misleads and imposes upon half-informed members; but abuse of opportunity does not invalidate its use, and irregular inquiry should be put down charily. When questioning is discouraged and vigilance ceases, a society dies; for apathy is death. Democracy is always a trouble, but democracy is education and life and independence. Despotism is the rule of the few, and creates the foolishness of the many.

One novelty, not peculiar to Leeds, but at times more conspicuous there than elsewhere, was that members who had meekly stood at shopkeepers' counters, paying what they were charged, for food which could not be trusted, and against which they had no protection, and never getting any dividend upon their purchases, had been abjectly silent—but when the devotion and sagacity of store directors had given them honest commodities and profit, they were blusterous, open-throated, noisy, violent, imputative, and offensive, requiring the police to keep them in order. But wise patience overcame refractoriness. Co-operation at least has had this merit—it has taught workmen of the roughest class to behave like gentlemen.

There have been honourable contests for principle in other societies, but in no co-operative stores have they been so often renewed as in Leeds. In three cardinal things the supremacy of the Leeds Society is indisputable—its great extent, its great revenue, and the originality of its organisation.



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